

CJR

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

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A Generation of Vipers

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"TO ASSESS THE PERFORMANCE OF JOURNALISM . . . TO HELP STIMULATE CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT IN THE PROFESSION, AND TO SPEAK OUT FOR WHAT IS RIGHT, FAIR, AND DECENT" From the founding editorial, 1961

"The Press is AWOL"

On January 26, Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism hosted the annual Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Awards for Excellence in Television and Radio Journalism. The occasion has become a gathering of the electronic clan to talk about what has happened in the past year in the industry and to celebrate those who have done outstanding work. The awards ceremony was hosted by Tom Brokaw and broadcast on PBS stations around the country. It was preceded by a day-long forum on issues and trends in electronic journalism, at which the keynote address was delivered by Bernard Kalb, moderator of "Reliable Sources" on CNN and former foreign correspondent for CBS, NBC, and The New York Times. His remarks are excerpted here.

Some people collect Chinese porcelain, some collect Persian rugs. I collect decades. I love wandering, rummaging through old decades in search of glitter and litter, integrity and trash, gibberish and substance. I wander through these decades in a personal and in a thematic way. I've wandered through my various journalistic travels — to when I first arrived in Asia in the late '50s, a less frantic time. I remember being handed a cable on a silver platter at the Erawan Hotel in Bangkok from *The New York Times* saying: Kalb, please cover anti-American riots in lobby of your hotel. So leisurely a time.

The '60s weren't that carefully plotted either. I'm thinking of Vietnam and the early days prior to satellite where you would take your film bag and give it to anybody leaving the country for a drop-off at Bangkok en route to CBS in New York. You never knew what destination your film bag would turn up in, and I remember I once got a cable saying, Kalb, please explain your film in Alaska.

And yet it was less than that haphazard. There was, indeed, a dimension of journalistic responsibility. I'm thinking of the capacity of the media to punch through some of the gibberish of the "five o'clock follies" — the daily briefing — in Saigon . . . the power and the impact of investigative reporting with the disclosure of secrets . . . and the pummeling of America with deception and deceit as anthologized in the Pentagon Papers.

In that ten-year span overlapping two decades you come up with a serious crescendo of journalistic responsibility. The media on guard. For the most part that is not true today of television news.

If you believe, as we all do, that the press is the sentinel of democracy, the sentinel, for the most part, is

AWOL. At a moment when there is an escalating and a pyramiding of a variety of crises and challenges confronting the United States — economic, social, racial — one would think that the media would be analyzing, probing, investigating America, making it clear to us. Instead, there is for the most part a dance with trash on the part of television news and the television networks.

There is a greater dimension involved in all this, and that has to do with the fact that the accumulating consequences of journalistic shallowness lead to the creation of a vacuum. And vacuums are politically exploitable. So it seems to me that this is a particularly dangerous moment. Exploitable for demagoguery in which instead of focusing on issues that need to be laser examined, we are being fed a constant diet, the OJisation of America, so to speak.

A public that is misinformed, underinformed, ill-informed, is not a country with citizen-using democracy. If you are prepared to entrust democracy to politicians, then you can live with the kind of programs that you're getting today. But if you believe that democracy requires nourishment, requires real journalistic vitamins rather than a lot of empty calories, the emptiness to a large extent of television news has, in my view, very dangerous consequences.

I keep thinking of the impact of the proliferation of TV news outlets — the nets, cable, the magazine shows — all fighting for a large chunk of the audience. And this has splashed the country with news, so as we have moved into what I have called the lurid or the trash dimensions or the sex/violence/murder sensationism, the upshot is a very cockeyed portrait of America.

I do not inhabit the America I see on television. Guns, crime, murder, incest, lust — these are not my neighbors. And even when crime figures are going down, television, because of its instant magnification of reality, offers up a constant portrait of America that does not at all resemble the America we live in.

What is the solution to this thing, this increasing crescendo of electronic emptiness? Do we count on the revolt of the masses? Do we go back to my old friend at City College, Paddy Chayevsky: I am fed up and I won't take it anymore? Do we take the dials off and throw them into the Hudson?

I cannot be very reassuring. I'm afraid that ten years from now, in the year 2005, when the decade examiners look back at this one, what I am indicting today will look absolutely golden. ♦

LETTERS

SPREADING THE WORD

What an interesting review of that Whitewater book James Boylan wrote in the January/February issue of *CJR*. One hardly expects better from *The Wall Street Journal*. After all, as the name implies, it should and does represent the interests of the business community. *The New York Times* has been a different kettle of fish. Not only have their editorials [under the editorship of Howell Raines] been shrill, to say the least, but even their news reporting has become stilted and rather biased, especially, but not exclusively, in regard to the Clintons.

All of which prompts me to suggest that we introduce a new word into the English language, to wit, the root *howell*. Perhaps it can be used in the same fashion as the Marquis de Sade became root for sadist. In this case, a *howellist* would be someone who treats someone else (imagined to be an equal) shabbily and self-righteously. Or perhaps it should be a verb, e.g., Clinton was *howelled* by *The New York Times*. What do you think?

EDMOND MURAD
Newton, Mass.

A POLICYMAKING PRESS?

Marvin Kalb's reverence for objectivity failed him in his account of my speech at the Kennedy School on April 7, 1994 ("The Nixon Memo," Short Takes, *CJR*, January/February). I have a transcript of the speech as well as the questions and answers at the end of the evening. The transcript shows that Kalb raised the question of "journalists affecting policy" and I answered that I "did not want to suggest that our job is to change policy." At no time did I "acknowledge" that while covering Bosnia, I, and a number of my colleagues, had "written the story with a view toward changing U.S. and NATO policy from diplomatic pressure to military action against Serbian forces."

Kalb's mischaracterization of my remarks is harmful to my reputation as a journalist. His carelessness is dangerous for

me as I continue to cover the war in ex-Yugoslavia. I hope he intends to correct this error in future editions of his book and that this letter will help set the record straight as the *CJR* excerpt makes its way through Nexis/Lexis.

DEBORAH AMOS
ABC News
New York, N.Y.

Marvin Kalb replies: *As I explained to Deborah Amos in a personal letter dated January 11, 1995, I have the highest regard for her professionalism and courage, which she has amply demonstrated in Bosnia and elsewhere. If, in The Nixon Memo, I committed an "error" in "mischaracterizing" her comments at Harvard, and thereby "endangering" her, then obviously I apologize. Nothing could have been further from my mind. I wish her well in all of her professional pursuits.*

*But, I do not think that I committed an error, or mischaracterized Ms. Amos's comments at Harvard. I suggested to Ms. Amos that before criticizing The Nixon Memo, she read it. I then told her that I vividly remember that at the time a number of my colleagues were as surprised as I about the thrust of her comments, so surprised that they urged me to ask a question seeking clarification. Her comments had clearly conveyed the view that brutal wars such as the one in Bosnia called upon the journalist to go beyond the traditional objectivity of the craft and call a spade a spade, a moral crime a moral crime. In response to my question, she said that she didn't mean to suggest that "our job is to change policy," but she did not repudiate her basic position — which was that Bosnia demanded another dimension from the journalist. That is a very interesting point, raising profound questions about modern-day journalism, which *CJR* ought to explore at greater length.*

I closed my letter to Ms. Amos by wishing her well, apologizing for any "unintended unhappiness I might have caused" and suggesting that "we both move on to our next assignments." I still think that is a good suggestion.

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WHERE THERE'S SMOKE . . .

Your January/February Darts & Laurels column featuring smoking is an excellent summary of little-known facts regarding the media's mixed handling of one of the most serious health problems facing our nation.

As your column indicates, tobacco company ownership or control of a number of publications and television stations results in one-sided pro-smoking coverage. I am under the impression that the tobacco company that makes Lorillard and Kent cigarettes, Loews Corp., has a substantial interest in CBS; therefore, one can understand, but not condone, the one-sided and misleading CBS-America Tonight coverage of the impact of a large cigarette tax in Canada.

Those publications and television stations not controlled by the tobacco industry would be performing an important public health service to the nation's more than 200 million nonsmokers constituting over 80 percent of our population by incorporating frequent features on poisonous tobacco smoke and secondary tobacco smoke. Your recent Darts & Laurels column was a step in that direction.

EDWARD L. KOVEN
Highland Park, Ill.

As an avid nonsmoker, I appreciate and support the sentiments expressed in the January/February Darts & Laurels column. As a journalist, I find it inappropriate to use the column to slam any news organization that dared to cross some imaginary line and was therefore tainted by some kind of (frequently remote) support by or involvement with smoking and/or the tobacco industry. People do smoke, just as they kill and lie and divorce. Reporting on that reality cannot automatically be construed as supporting the action.

Darts & Laurels is an interesting column that leads many of us to think long and hard about any unintended impressions our coverage might conjure up. Keep it that way, and leave out attempts to advance a social agenda.

KEN IBOLD
Editorial director
BPI Communications
(which to my knowledge is not connected to
any tobacco interest)
Coral Springs, Fla.

Thank you for devoting the Darts & Laurels column to coverage of the tobacco industry. Marvel Entertainment came out looking like a hero for removing smoking from its trading cards after a

seven-year-old sent a letter of protest to *The New England Journal of Medicine*; however, smoking among heroes in Marvel comic books is proliferating, and they are now adding teen smokers. I hope that this issue can be examined, as Marvel comics are a source of role-modelling for children and youth.

MICHAEL LIPPMAN, M.D.
President
DOC (Doctors Ought to Care)
Seattle, Wash.

WEATHER REPORT

In reading Jeff Gremillion's piece "Star School" (CJR, January/February), I was reminded of some advice from one of my J-school instructors: if called upon to report the weather, first stick your head out the window. If Gremillion had done so (metaphorically), he might have discovered that there is nothing new about networks taking a direct interest in developing potential correspondents. He would also have discovered that if indeed CBS has "recently launched a minority reporter training program of its own" it must be a "re-launch" since I was in such a CBS program from 1977 to 1979. In fact, the program was headed by Peter Herford, who is now a faculty member at Columbia's journalism school.

FRANCES HARDIN
Executive producer, Russia Video Project
International Monetary Fund
Washington, D.C.

Jeff Gremillion replies: *According to Herford, with whom I indeed spoke in the course of my reporting, there was no goal in the old program to create on-air talent for the network; instead, the short-term goal was to produce minority correspondents for local markets. That sets it apart from the current CBS program and the ABC program that was my focus. As for my historical perspective on my subject, I refer you to the piece. "Network news divisions," I wrote, "have been in the star-making business since the dawn of television."*

FATHOMING THE FED

The two articles about coverage of the Federal Reserve Board (CJR, January/February) were good, as far as they went. However, both were flawed by accepting at face value the idea that the Fed's goal is to fight inflation. I suggest that the Fed is actually more concerned with preventing wage increases.

The Fed and its supporters assert that the economy is growing too fast when demand for labor causes wages to rise, leading to

The Award-Winning Op-Ed Page of The New York Times

NEW YORK TIMES OP-ED SUNDAY, JULY 18, 1993

In America
BOB HERBERT

Clinton Caves In

He didn't try to. He said, "The best is still to come but the inevitable is a dose of President Clinton's O.K. if he plans to keep the closet door open in the military."

That, another person inside and another person outside the White House, said. Clinton's supporters are not alone.

He said this in a matter of minutes, after a 15-minute interview with the *New York Times* on the eve of his arrival in the White House.

The only one Bill Clinton didn't see in the White House, he apparently said, was the closet door. He said, "I don't think I can see the difference, but I can see the difference between the closet door and the closet door."

Clinton, 45, said Clinton didn't see the difference, but he can see the difference between the closet door and the closet door. He said, "I don't think I can see the difference, but I can see the difference between the closet door and the closet door."

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Engineers of Death

By Gerald Fleming

ON March 4, 1945, agents of the Red Army's military intelligence branch in the western German city of Erfurt arrested four German engineers of the Luftwaffe. The men had been found on a train, en route to a concentration camp in Buchenwald, 100 miles from Erfurt. The men were: Ernst Krumpholtz, Ernst Krumpholtz, Ernst Krumpholtz, Ernst Krumpholtz.

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Finally, builders of the crematoriums tell their story.

THE men who designed and built the crematoriums at Buchenwald, Auschwitz, and other Nazi concentration camps were not the architects of the Holocaust. They were the engineers of death.

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The New York Times has been honored with the Gold Award for Best Op-Ed Page (for the second year in a row) by the Association of Opinion Page Editors and Penn State's School of Communications.

The judges were John Seigenthaler of Freedom Forum/USA Today, Ray Jenkins of The Baltimore Evening Sun and Jock Lautner of Penn State University.

The Times won the 1994 Gold Award for its July 18, 1993, Op-Ed page, which featured a contribution by a British historian, Gerald Fleming. His article, "Engineers of Death," was based on his research into recently available wartime archives in Moscow, which reported the testimony of four German engineers and technicians who designed and built concentration camp crematoriums during World War II. The page also featured an "In America" column by Bob Herbert, about President Clinton's policy on gays in the military.

Keeping the closet door closed on gay soldiers.

ward the truth in that episode is closely related to the message for the military that it is to adhere to the national policy regarding gays in the military.

The message is clear. Clinton's handling of the issue is a matter of the military that it is to adhere to the national policy regarding gays in the military.

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The strain on the furnaces was colossal.

A. Yes, I did not use one of the crematoriums. Between the gas chambers and the crematoriums there was a connecting system.

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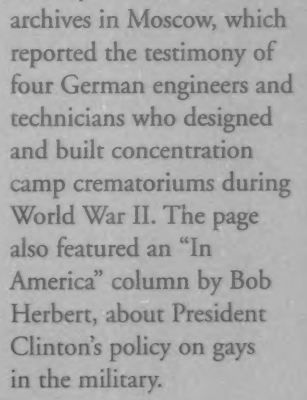
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inflation. But when else are wages going to rise? In an economy where collective bargaining no longer plays a significant role in setting wages, demand pressure is the only force likely to raise them. Therefore, the Fed's goal, more clearly stated, is to freeze wages. Note that employer demand for higher profit, which might also increase inflation, is missing from this equation. The result, then, is to freeze wages while allowing profits to rise freely.

However, as Eileen Shanahan pointed out in her article, international competitive pressure is making it more difficult to raise prices. If the economy strengthens to the point that demand for labor causes wages to rise, but prices cannot be increased, then the higher wages will have to be paid out of money that otherwise would have been profit. I think it is fear of this squeeze that is driving the Fed's current actions.

KENNETH FALL
Madison, Wis.

In spite of all the delirious fantasizing about the arcane role of the Federal Reserve for the past thirty or forty years of U.S. political culture, the facts are obvious: the Fed loosens credit for Republican administrations and boosts interest rates during Democratic ones, i.e., low rates for Bush, elevated rates for Clinton.

ROBERT C. SOMMER
New York, N.Y.

GETTING IT STRAIGHT

Kurtz on the I-man (CJR, January/February) has one item slightly skewed. "Straight man Charles McCord" is the *author* of the comedic bits introduced by the impersonators; i.e., he is "straight" only when he's on the air as himself.

W.W. KEEN JAMES
Providence, R.I.

OTHER THAN THAT . . .

I'm not very happy with the new format of CJR, nor with its new contents, which I can only dub CJRLITE. I wondered why the November/December issue sat unread for so long when normally I get right to the magazine when it arrives. When I finally read it over the holidays, I saw why I'd kept putting it down (aside from the extraordinarily uninteresting cover, despite — or because of? — the fact that the legend, which I assume says "gang raped," is obscured by my address label).

Since I've read and subscribed to your magazine for so long — and tried and quit most of your competitors — I thought I'd

have the audacity to tell you [some of the things] I think [are] wrong.

- Your huge new headlines: do we really need 100+ point type to recognize the letters "O.J."? Do we need dancing letters to help us think about "cyberspace"?

- First-person gushes and reminiscences by journalists (Halberstam and Wooten in one issue?). (And it's sad to see all those guys' names listed on front; not that women's names would be better: it's just that names are just that, names, not substance. Tell us what, not who, is inside.)

- That really dumb photo of Shelby Coffey III (whose name is buried three-fourths of the way down the caption).

- THE VERY LARGE LETTERS introducing EYE ON APARTHEID, which I suppose is meant to signal that the article is mostly pix, not words. In fact, it is an obit, accompanied by three sensationalist images of scenes of mayhem that are poorly supported either by their captions or by the text. It's not that I think obits are out of place; far from it. What I think is that this one is milked.

Luckily, Anthony Marro's book review is at least a serious piece, since little else in the magazine was. I'd say that Edwin Diamond's painfully ridiculous assertion that "under Newhouse, Brown's *New Yorker* has been lively and informative — a must-read once again" about sums up what seems to be the tacky philosophy overtaking CJR. I've stopped reading *The New Yorker*, as have all my friends (one by one, not by conspiracy or consensus). And no, it did not make my nipples firm.

(Note: I still love The Lower case and Darts & Laurels.)

MARTHA ROSLER
Brooklyn, N.Y.

SPEAKING OF REGIONALS

I'm glad Bruce Porter reviewed and found enlightening *Speaking of Journalism*, edited by William Zinsser (CJR, January/February). In the final paragraphs, Porter notes the book "reads a little breezily," and he is right: Zinsser and his contributors, including me, were at pains to maintain the conversational character of our original presentations in the printed version of the book. And so some ambiguity might be read into the sentence of mine that Porter quoted. ["As it happened, the magazine came out a few days after I had waited to have breakfast with the governor, who had just died of a heart attack."]

In any case, the reason I brought up that example [about health care in Vermont] was to show that regional and city magazines, like *Vermont Magazine*, can be more than

life-style or reader-service publications; they can be sources of significant, enduring journalism. I hope Porter's review doesn't contribute to further ghettoization of a medium which can, and sometimes does, attain a higher standard of quality. Certainly I and the writers with whom I've been privileged to work aspire to that every day.

JOHN S. ROSENBERG
Middlebury, Vt.

MORE STORE STORIES!

After reading Lawrence Beaupre's letter in the September/October *CJR* [in which he defended his paper against a Dart for giving page-one play to a story about a Kroger promotion, on the ground of "clear consumer interest"] I was disappointed that there was no editor's reply. Then I waited for commentary from other journalists in subsequent issues of *CJR*. Nothing. I suppose the response of the editor of the *Cincinnati Enquirer* is so clear in its implications that no comment seemed to be necessary.

However, I believe that sometimes even the obvious needs to be articulated. Editor Beaupre has opened the door to exciting opportunities for meeting readership needs. Research in virtually any community could uncover those businesses that dominate their specific markets and which also advertise in that community's newspaper; further research could uncover particularly impressive purchasing opportunities for readers as offered by the defined businesses. Once-in-a-lifetime major appliance discounts, triple-coupons with no face value limit, zero financing for the duration of payments — the possibilities seem endless. The only limitation I see for this readership service is the potential for front-page space conflicts, particularly during major events like the O.J. Simpson trial.

S.W. VANDERMARK
Framingham, Mass.

A SAD (NOT GAY) COMMENTARY

I think both the *Columbia Journalism Review* and Mark M. Sweetwood, editor of the Crystal Lake, Illinois, *Northwest Herald*, have missed the real point underlying the Dart's mention of the *Herald's* headline ATOMIC BOMBERS CRITICIZE ENOLA HOMOSEXUAL EXHIBIT. The Dart (*CJR*, November/December) perceived an "overzealous application of traditional terminology when describing a certain type of sexual orientation." Sweetwood claims it was all a "careless mistake that occurred on deadline" (Letters, January/February). In my view, the striking thing about the "mistake"

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is that the *Herald* has a bunch of people working for it who have never heard of the *Enola Gay*. What do they teach in J-school?

RALPH ADAM FINE
Milwaukee, Wis.

FIRST ON PHELPS

There's only one news outlet that dared to go first in reporting the strange story of self-proclaimed gay-bashing preacher Fred Phelps ("Twisted in Topeka," September/October): the investigative team at Kansas City's NBC TV station, KSHB. Only after our second story did the Kansas City weekly *New Times* print its story, citing KSHB. Other news outlets ran with the story days later.

In preparing our first story, Scripps-Howard attorneys, station management, and our I-Team worked closely together. We clearly saw the likelihood of legal challenges from the *Capital-Journal* (which claimed to own the story) and the lawsuit-happy Phelps himself. But we saw the story as more important and felt we'd done a responsible, careful job in reporting our story.

If we'd stayed away from it as the others did, would this story ever have seen the light of day?

JEFF BURNSIDE
Executive producer, special projects
KSHB-TV
Kansas City, Mo.

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DAMNED IF YOU DO . . .

The Publisher's Note column in your November/December issue was titled "It's the Content, Stupid." And, indeed it is, for the column refers to a "tinker's damn." Obviously, someone doesn't know that the phrase tinker's dam has nothing to do with profanity. Back in the days when metal pots and pans were still considered expensive items, you didn't just throw one out because it had a hole in it. Instead, you paid a "tinker" to put a dam — patch, if you prefer — over the hole. The saying that someone doesn't "give a tinker's dam" simply refers to the fact that something isn't worth fixing.

BRUCE KUECK
Fenton, Mo.

The editors reply: Mr. Kueck is right, of course, but so is CJR. According to Webster, the origins of tinker's dam (the first citation, presumably preferred) can be explained thusly: "Probably so called because of the tinker's reputation for blasphemy"; referred quotations are from James Blish and H.J. Laski. The second citation, tinker's dam, matches Kueck's explanation. Damn or dam, the meaning seems to be the same: "something absolutely worthless."

WHOWHATWHENWHEREWHY

tv's magazine shakeout

Just a year ago, the major networks were bursting with newsmagazines and considering plenty of new ones for prime time. Back then, it appeared that the genre had nowhere to go but up. CBS, NBC, and Fox were so confident in the appeal of these shows that they dangled scads of them before Diane Sawyer in an unsuccessful effort to lure her away from ABC.

But the boom is over and the bust seems to have begun. Ratings for most of the TV newsmagazines have declined dramatically and audiences are turning to one-hour dramas like *ER* in droves. Fox put its planned magazine, *Full Disclosure*, on hold and ABC reduced *Turning Point* to a series of specials. Meanwhile, many network executives think ABC's *Day One* and CBS's *48 Hours* and *Eye to Eye with Connie Chung* could face the ax in a big magazine shakeout this season.

As a result, a lot of insiders are worried about their jobs, and many of them blame the network executives who created so many of these shows and oversaturated the market. "The party has been spoiled," says one network news staff member. But the executives, naturally, have other theories.

The proliferation of the magazines has often been explained

in simple economic terms: magazines cost about \$500,000 an episode to produce, versus \$1 million for a drama. But since dramas can be re-run, while magazines must continually create fresh episodes, the costs tend to even out over the long run. (Unlike entertainment shows, however, a successful newsmagazine like *60 Minutes* or *20/20* can run for decades. And when a magazine is successful, it helps a network establish an identity, which is increasingly important as channel capacity grows.)

Network executives say the reason so many magazines were created is that audiences seemed to want them. A year ago established shows like *PrimeTime Live*, *48 Hours*, and *Turning Point* regularly scored double-digit ratings, putting them in the top of the TV rankings. "The expansion came logically out of an audience interest in the programming," says Andrew Lack, president of

NBC News, whose only magazine show, *Dateline: NBC*, grew in two and a half years from one night a week to three.

So confident were the networks of audience demand for these shows that they began pitting them against each other last summer — *Turning Point* vs. *48 Hours*, for example, and *Dateline: NBC* vs. *PrimeTime Live*. With the magazines competing as they never had before, the viewing audience was diluted. "By going up against each other, we split what is essentially an affinity audience," says CBS News president Eric Ober. "That has more to do with the demise of newsmagazines than any other factor."

Multiple newsmagazines, meanwhile, take a toll on a network's news division, creating competition for high-impact stories and leading to turf wars between the shows and a diminution of quality segments. A case in point is

this season's *PrimeTime Live*, hosted by Diane Sawyer and Sam Donaldson. It has aired bold exposés on government waste, but also resorted to less impressive undercover "investigations" of, say, psychics (see "Hidden cameras: a million-dollar peek," page 15). Meanwhile, the *PrimeTime* and *20/20* staffs often battle it out for stories at ABC, network sources say.

"We didn't realize the strain these shows would put on our news division," admits Alan Wurtzel, ABC's senior vice president, news magazines. "We spread ourselves thin and that hurt the shows. There are only so many stories out there and everyone is mining the same territory, so sometimes you end up going to another level of stories that you wouldn't otherwise look to."

NBC executives are not buying these theories, however, perhaps because their *Dateline*, hosted by Jane Pauley and Stone Phillips, is the only newsmagazine whose ratings rose this season. "My competitors have suddenly run wild declaring that there are too many newsmagazines and not enough viewers," says Lack. "But we have proven that's not true. Our audience is growing." At least for now. Ratings can be fickle, and the TV newsmagazine business has become as competitive as it gets.

Alan Mirabella

Mirabella is the media reporter for Crain's New York Business.



the baseball strike: close to the action

Baseball can be covered from any seat in the stadium. Baseball strikes are different. Access is often limited to a small handful of news outlets, which are heavily courted by both sides. The news that most of the public has read or heard about the 1994-1995 labor dispute has been shaped primarily by The Associated Press, *USA Today*, *The Washington Post*, ESPN, and, to the chagrin of the owners, by Murray Chass of *The New York Times*.

Chass is considered by many to be the most informed writer on baseball's labor front. At one point during negotiations, John L. Harrington, chief executive officer of the Boston Red Sox and the owners' lead negotiator, was asked by reporters about developments in the talks. "I don't know," he said. "Let's ask Murray."

Baseball America recently named Chass among the most powerful media figures in the sport. "Editors at daily newspapers across the nation scan the news wires for Chass stories, knowing he gives readers the best insight available," the national paper reported.

From the perspective of some of the owners, meanwhile, Chass's insight is a result of a cozy relationship with the Major League Players Association. "Murray Chass is the pipeline for the union," says Philadelphia Phillies owner Bill Giles. "I'm surprised he's not on their public

relations staff." Richard Levin, director of public relations for Major League Baseball, cites a September 6 column by Chass that quoted extensively from a report on baseball's economics by Stanford economist Roger Noll, a report that was sympathetic to many of the union's positions. Chass did note that for the owners, Noll's analysis "is pornography that they rate with so many X's not even adults should read it."

But "he didn't say in there that Noll is paid by the union," Levin says.

Chass points out that he had written several days earlier that Noll's report was done for the union. "I'm not sure it has to be spelled out every time it is mentioned," he says. "I do make it clear that the owners have no use for his reports. Even though he was asked to do this for the [players] association, I point out that the analysis he did previously turned out to be accurate."

Chass says owners have always resented his coverage because in the early days of the labor battles in baseball he was one of the few writers who reported the union's side. "I've had owners accusing me of this for twenty-five years," he says. "It's nothing new, and there's no more truth to it now than there ever was."

"Something the owners have never understood was that a reporter likes to get both sides of the story," he

adds. "My years at The Associated Press taught me that, so I would call the union to get its side. The owners have never recovered from the union being able to present its case to the public in the newspaper."

Chass does concede that baseball union officials have been more accessible to reporters than the owners, more responsive to press questions. This may be due partly to the fact that the union uses the press to communicate with its far-flung membership.

"There's no question it's important for them to use the press," says John Helyar, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter and author of *Lords of the Realm*, which details the history of the business of the game. "It would be pretty inefficient to have a player representative from each of the twenty-eight teams have to call every player on the club to keep them informed. This way they go right to the player through the media."

"And in some respects," he says, "it does make this labor dispute harder to resolve than others because it does take place in a fishbowl."

Herb Fishgold would agree. Fishgold is a junior associate of the mediator W.J. Utery, who has helped settle strikes in many industries and who was asked by Labor Secretary Robert Reich in October to help settle this one. Fishgold found the baseball media to be less than helpful. "It was very frustrating," he says. "We would spend an hour or two trying to get rid of the statements that were made in the press. Both sides did it, and it's counterproductive. It detracts from the attention you need at the bargaining table."

Thom Loverro

Loverro is a reporter for The Washington Times.

whodunit? autopsy on a killed story

In old westerns, the gunslinger pulls his six-shooter and issues a dire warning: "No false moves." Then the bullets fly.

At WCPO-TV, a Scripps-Howard station in Cincinnati, the shooting is almost over. No real blood has been spilled, but two gunslingers — I-Team investigative reporters Corky Johnson and Karl Idsvoog — have saddled up and ridden out.

Questions arise as the dust settles. Who made the false move? Was it Johnson and Idsvoog for their handling of a tricky story? Or was it managers for the station who ordered the reporters to drop a part of that story that involved an influential local lawyer?

The opening scene is early last August, when trial lawyers told the reporters about judges who appeared to tip the scales of justice in favor of contributors. Johnson and Idsvoog, experienced reporters who had trained other Scripps-Howard I-Teams, easily got clearance for a project and began loading contributions into a database so they could look for patterns.

Their preliminary findings, Johnson says, included a lower court judge who contributed to an appellate judge sitting directly above. And there were lawyers who tried cases before judges they had supported with contributions. But the project needed a quid pro quo, a dramatic case in which a judge's findings were so plainly biased that no one could miss the point.

In early September the team got a tip on a long-running custody battle in which the judge had ruled for the father,



James E. Evans, a well-connected lawyer who serves as general counsel under the powerful local business magnate Carl H. Lindner, Jr. In the database Idsvoog and Johnson were building, both Evans and Lindner showed up as significant contributors to various candidates for the bench.

"We pulled the court documents on the custody case," Johnson says, "and in early September we had a big meeting. The whole team was there. We spelled the whole case out. They gave us a green light."

The mother in the custody case became a primary source for the reporters. She had been cut off from her child, with only supervised visits allowed. The court had heard lots of testimony indicating that the mother was seriously unstable and that the daughter, now fifteen years old, was facing a mental crisis as a result of an unhealthy rela-

tionship with her mother. Telephone contact between the two, and even third-party communications, were banned.

Idsvoog and Johnson say they needed to ask the girl, on camera, if her mother had ever mistreated her. So, early in October, Johnson approached the girl on the sidewalk near her school and handed her a note of introduction from her mother. "These men are here to help re-establish visitations," the note said. "Tell them how you feel. I love you, Mom." The

SOUNDBITE

"The very qualities that make today's journalism so compelling — the seamless narrative, the eye for detail, the blend of empathy and candor — serve also to highlight the behavior of the poor, making it seem the cause of their poverty rather than the other way around."

Michael Massing, in a review of several books about the inner city in the January 16 New Yorker.

team says they saw the note as simply a way to let the girl know it would be all right to talk. It didn't misrepresent their purpose, Johnson says, because the reporter identified himself to the girl and gave her a business card.

As for the court's ban on the mother communicating with the girl through third parties, Johnson says he and his partner "would never knowingly violate the law. We were trying to do our job and we thought it was crucial to inter-

view the girl."

Johnson says he felt great after talking to the girl, who was videotaped with a hidden camera. "She said she loved her mom, missed her very much." And the question of abuse by her mother had drawn a clear response: "No. God, no," the child said, as Johnson recalls.

The pieces were coming together, at least from Idsvoog's and Johnson's perspective. They had Evans, the father, giving campaign money to judges in the case (as well as to other judges). They had the family court's imposition of severe restrictions on visitation in a ruling based in part on experts hired by the father — without a psychological evaluation by an independent expert. They had an appellate ruling that faulted the family court judge, in part for relying on the father's witnesses. They had a feder-

love in the trenches by JAMES E. EVANS

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al suit, filed in October 1993 by the mother, charging that the state court judges had been swayed by campaign contributions. And, now, they had the girl on camera.

Back in the newsroom later that afternoon, Johnson took a call from Evans's lawyer. As Johnson recalls the conversation, the lawyer was threatening: "You sound like a young man with a career in front of you," the lawyer said. "I hope we don't have to take this to a higher level."

In the following days, Evans's lawyer also called one of the station's attorneys. An executive of Scripps-Howard weighed in with a cautionary comment to the station's general manager, J.B. Chase. News director Jim Zarchin grew more concerned after an informal conversation with a friend whose wife related troubling details about the mother. The three conversations, Zarchin says, left him worried that the custody battle was an ill-fitting case in point for the story.

As they looked deeper, Zarchin and other managers at WCPO-TV say they perceived mounting evidence that the reporters did not have a real quid pro quo, that the painful custody case was the opposite of clear cut.

By mid-October the story was in deep trouble. By then the issue had split the shop — reporters on one side, managers on the other — both sides claiming theirs was the journalistic high ground. In conversation with colleagues, Idsvoog and Johnson spoke of corporate censorship. Some staff members matched the Evans case with tales of another story related to Carl Lindner that had been heavily edited. The place was tense.

Station managers, saying they were concerned with the team's handling of the note from the mother and weary of the censorship charges, pulled the trigger on January 4. They

called in Idsvoog and Johnson, read them a seventeen-page memo assailing both the conduct of the team and the newsworthiness of the custody case, then handed them a much shorter one from Chase, the general manager. That shorter memo gave them three choices: apologize to management in a meeting to be attended by the staff, quit, or be fired. The apology, Chase wrote, should "acknowledge that your allegations [of censorship] and your overall news judgment were, simply stated, off base."

Johnson and Idsvoog walked out. A dispute lingers over whether they quit or were fired. Both reporters turned down a severance offer because it included a clause requiring their silence on the matter.

Chase won't comment. A lawyer for the station, John F. Novatney, Jr., says Idsvoog and Johnson "were on a vendetta course" and would not take direction from their managers. "We felt, when everything started to come into focus, that they had lost their objectivity and for some reason had become spokespersons for the ex-wife," Novatney says. "That's where we parted company."

Idsvoog, for his part, believes management had been intimidated by Evans, one of the largest contributors to judges that he and his partner found. He and Johnson, he says, refused a management request to pursue the story without the custody case. "How could we do the story without Evans?" Idsvoog says. "He was among the biggest contributors. This is the worst case of corporate censorship I have ever experienced. There is no way we could accept this and ever call ourselves journalists. So here we are."

Phil Linsalata

Linsalata is a reporter for the Detroit Free Press.

how herb caen paid his union dues

The actual outcome of the eleven-day strike last November by nine newspaper unions against the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Francisco Examiner* is muddled. Will Hearst resigned a month later as *Examiner* publisher, an act that's hard to construe as a victory lap. Teamsters and management are at odds about how much job protection actually was negotiated for union truck drivers. Dozens of other disagreements have surfaced, and a second strike is a possibility, though not yet a likelihood. Against this seething background, one clear moment has assumed the stuff of minor newspaper legend. That was when seventy-eight-year-old *Chronicle* columnist Herb Caen led a select group of *Chronicle* and *Examiner* writers before the local TV cameras to vow that they wouldn't return to work until everyone returned to work.

It was pure labor theater, but even semi-hardened *Chronicle* columnist Jon Carroll says that, to his own astonishment, tears of gratitude sprang to his eyes when Caen stepped forward. Even though it was unthinkable that a longtime union stalwart like Caen would do otherwise, at that moment in the strike, plenty of union members were thinking the unthinkable.

The press conference itself was an improvisation. Newspaper management had sent a letter to the 2,600 strikers threatening immediate termination if they didn't return to work. Though the union leaders had anticipated the threat, phone trees and face-to-face pep talks weren't pro-

viding reassurance fast enough.

The idea for the press conference apparently belongs to Doug Cuthbertson, executive officer of the Northern California Newspaper Guild. "I knew [the pledge] would have enormous impact on the people out there on the picket line in the rain," he says. "It was even bigger than I thought." In particular, Cuthbertson says, the TV moment reminded secretaries and clerks that they were not alone, that they were part of something larger. "If the day people got the 'permanent replacement' letters was the nadir, the press conference was

worth of recognition factor adds up, as *Chronicle* investigative reporter Susan Sward discovered when a produce clerk at her Safeway supermarket told her he knew the newspaper unions were on strike, and said, "You guys got Herb Caen to come out for you."

Perhaps, as Cuthbertson suggests, the unexpected emotion the press conference stirred inside the two papers was simply a momentary overflow of their anxiety. Perhaps, as *Chronicle* editor Bill German says, it resulted from the fact that "they didn't know Herb very well."

Or, as Carroll says, it may have come from the somewhat

tion is he'll write till he drops dead, and his fans will want to read about the funeral.) The betting, says union official Wallace, runs from 15,000 to 150,000.

J. Michael Robertson

Robertson, a *Chronicle* reporter for eleven years, teaches journalism at the University of San Francisco.

hidden cameras

a million-dollar peek

It may have been a critical juncture for undercover TV, but it sure didn't look like much. ABC's *PrimeTime Live* spent three months trying to document that a 900 telephone number offering advice from "live psychics" was, if not a total sham, at least a lousy way to spend \$3.49 a minute. "Hello, Telepsychic" ran in February 1993, and now ABC gets its payoff for illustrating what most viewers probably already assumed.

Last summer, a California jury decided the show's use of "hat-cam" hidden-cameras violated the privacy of the plaintiffs, two men who gave readings, and in what seems to be the first such decision against a newsmagazine show, awarded them more than \$1,000,000 in actual and punitive damages. Now the judge is threatening further steps, in a state noted for its tough attitude toward clandestine recording. The case is likely to cast a shadow across the lenses of TV's powerful hidden-camera tools (see

"Truth, Lies, and Videotape," *CJR*, July/August 1993).



right at the apex," says Bill Wallace, *Chronicle* reporter and president of the Northern California Newspaper Guild. "It was a triumphant moment."

That Herb Caen would mean the most to those outside the newsroom was a foregone conclusion. In spite of his style and wit, his column does not travel well outside a 100-mile radius of San Francisco, consisting as it does of dozens of individual local items in the Neolithic three-dot style about socialites and politicians, opera openings and gossip, bad puns and nostalgia. But he remains a Bay Area icon. Fifty years

unnerving realization that Caen might be the only one of the columnists and writers who really mattered to management. That insight has its own comforting corollary, of course: the paper has got to have Herb Caen; if he's with the union, the union wins. "I called him first," Cuthbertson says. "I would have been a naked mercenary without him."

A standard argument in the *Chronicle* newsroom has always been this: how many of the paper's half-million readers will cancel their subscriptions the day after Herb Caen is buried? (The assump-

To view "Hello, Telepsychic" is not exactly to be riveted by great investigative work. Through hidden cameras we see an ABC operative at work, offering advice to customers from a tarot card crib sheet. One of the plaintiffs is seen speaking wistfully about managing rock bands; the other about working in comedy, as if the psychic business was just a way to make a buck. The piece implied that the fortune tellers didn't believe in what they were selling. Yet the jury spent two days watching outtakes in which workers talk as if they believe they are psychics. "The jurors were astonished and appalled," says the winning attorney, Neville Johnson of Los Angeles.

The ads for the psychic line warn that they are "for entertainment purposes only." And in the segment, *PrimeTime* notes that the card-reading ser-

vice had done nothing illegal, yet makes the point that the customers are largely undereducated people with significant vulnerabilities who can little afford the hefty phone charges, which typically run \$30 a call.

Johnson argued that ABC had no right to secretly film and vilify by association private individuals who had done nothing illegal. He painted a picture of damage done to the lives of the plaintiffs by their few seconds of fame: ridicule and humiliation before millions of viewers. One plaintiff, the lawyer told the court, received

SOUNDBITE

"I think I was allowed a little anxiety . . . If something happened to the curl in my brain that causes verbs I would be one of those home relief cases that people hate so much."

Jimmy Breslin, in one of a series of columns in New York Newsday describing his recent brain surgery to remove an aneurysm.

134 irate phone calls within 48 hours of the show. The lawyer says the program exacerbated one client's severe alcoholism — he died during jury deliberation. His clients, he says, were never asked to respond to the implications of the

ed like any other case. He took ABC off the hook for its audiotaping — although California's penal code clearly outlaws the audiotaping of confidential communications. ABC argued that the scenes and conversations it captured were not confidential, since they took place in a large open office and other gathering places, where they could easily have been seen and heard by others. In the end, Judge Geernhaert allowed the case to proceed on the question of whether secretly videotaping the plaintiffs was an invasion of their privacy.

In recent weeks, the judge, declaring that ABC's attitude indicated it had learned nothing from the case, has threatened to issue an injunction barring the network from using hidden cameras in California workplaces closed to the public. If so, says a spokesperson, Capital Cities/ABC "would vigorously oppose it."

edited footage.

ABC would have preferred that the case be viewed as a press freedom issue, contending it had every right to go into a business offering its services to the public and show what goes on there. But Superior Court Judge Bruce Geernhaert insisted it be treat-

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OPINION

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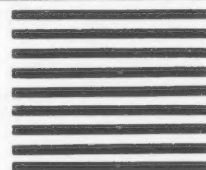
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Attorney Johnson argues that the bigger debate must be over what he considers the media's self-appointed role in undercover work. "Since when did journalists get quasi-police powers?" he says. "The police and FBI have to go to court to get permission to do this stuff."

Television journalists might phrase it differently, but they've been struggling with the same issue. The Society of Professional Journalists, for example, has produced a checklist of conditions it thinks ought to be met before a hidden camera is employed. First on the list: when the information is of "profound importance" and "vital public interest." Don Hewitt, executive producer of CBS's *60 Minutes*, has his own rule of thumb: a person's right to privacy is forfeit when he's up to no good, Hewitt says, but he insists that news organizations ought to choose carefully when they use hidden cameras and be sure they're showing real culprits.

Johnson says he has filed two additional hidden-camera lawsuits, one related to the same *PrimeTime* segment, and that other potential hidden-camera victims have surfaced. He hopes that by the time he's finished, news organizations will have decided that there are other ways to get the story. Meanwhile, the chill has set in. "There's been something of a backlash to those pieces here," says a knowledgeable ABC News source. "They're not doing them as much. They've definitely tightened things up, and in doing so made it more difficult to get good pieces on the air."

Russ Baker

Baker is a writer and television producer in New York.

wronging the right

For two years, reporters from the nation's top newspapers flooded into the city of Vista, California, after fundamentalists took over the local school board in November 1992. They came in search of the religious right. And they got a lot wrong.

Some of the errors were harmless, such as the lead of a *Chicago Tribune* story last November that described Vista as being "nestled high in a southern California mountainside" — news to Vista residents, who are ten minutes from the Pacific Ocean and only 450 feet above sea level.

But other errors were anything but innocuous. "They blew up things larger than reality," said a former school board president, John Tyndall. "The national media helped fuel a perception that things were happening that weren't." Indeed, reporters didn't do their homework, sometimes blindly relying on their sources and on each other's stories. And the resulting errors invariably made the board appear more Bible-thumping and meanspirited than it actually was.

In August 1993, for example, the board approved a policy encouraging — but not ordering — teachers to challenge existing scientific theories. While the board clearly wanted to weaken the theory of evolution, the policy was largely symbolic and actually required nothing new of teachers.

But in a page-one story, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that the board had ordered teachers to discuss creationism. The story relied upon wording from the draft version of the policy, which did issue orders to teachers. But the board had ultimately rewritten the draft, taking out



the mandate. *The New York Times* made the same mistake on the same day, and the *Chicago Tribune* soon followed suit.

Although a phone call to the school district to get the correct wording of the policy would have prevented the error, The Associated Press reported days later that the board had told teachers to teach the story of Genesis "as an alternative theory to evolution."

Eight months later, the *Los Angeles Times* expanded the myth, reporting that the board had lowered evolution to the status of "just another theory" and that it had required discussion of divine creation in science class. Neither assertion was true.

Another myth began last March, when the *Times* quoted a critic of the board who said it had rejected a school breakfast program because "children not eating breakfast with parents tends to corrupt family values." In fact, the board had never debated school breakfasts or whether children should eat at home. (However, after the *Times* story appeared, the board did reject a federal lunch program to feed children during school vacations. Board members

argued that the program was a waste of taxpayers' money.)

As the false story spread, the attribution to the critic, who had been wrong in the first place, disappeared, and the tale of the anti-breakfast school board became fact. Months later, *The New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* both reported that the board had taken an ax to school breakfasts, with the *Tribune* even repeating the untruth that the board had done so because it wanted children to eat at home. This story even made its way into American Civil Liberties Union fund-raising literature, in a letter blasting the board's alleged aversion to school breakfasts, among other things.

There were other errors. The *Los Angeles Times*, quoting the same anti-board activist, reported that the board had eliminated free busing for poor children, when the board actually only trimmed it. *The New York Times* said the board tried to "reintroduce prayer to the school system." In fact, the board never discussed school prayer (although it did begin holding voluntary invocations before board meetings).

There was a lot of news to

be found in Vista: residents were engaged in cultural warfare over everything from sex education to illegal immigration. And not all reporting was bad. The local papers often got the story right; *The Washington Post* correctly reported that the board's new science policy was largely symbolic; *The New York Times* did correct its school breakfast and school prayer errors, three weeks after they appeared.

Fundamentalist Christians in Vista say biased reporters contributed to their defeat in the November election, when they lost control of the board. That's debatable. But there is no doubt that chances for a debate on the real issues were diminished.

Randy Dotinga

Dotinga, a reporter for the Times Advocate of Escondido, California, covers city politics and education in Vista.

SOUNDBITE

"By allowing a kind of social Darwinism — aka Reaganism — to go mostly unchallenged, and by failing on the other hand to adequately expose the inane contradictions of supply-side theories, aka Reaganomics, I believe journalism deserves some of the blame for ills that now afflict us. These include a deficit that hobbles us and a debt load that will bend us low for years to come."

Osborn Elliott, former Newsweek editor, in the John Hersey Memorial Lecture in Key West in January.

Heavyweight editing in ten easy stomps

The following underground guide to newspaper editing, written by a New York Times reporter who would like to remain anonymous, has been circulating at that newspaper and beyond.

- 1. Your lead here. Write what you think you know about the subject, what you feel happened, what your gut tells you.
- 2. Move reporter's second graf down to bottom where it can be bitten off in the composing room.
- 3. Fashion new second graf from material deep down in story, preferably with a mysterious second reference to someone not introduced yet.
- 4. For a quote, get the reporter to put into someone's

mouth what you believe or suspect happened.

- 5. Write and complete the sentence: At stake is (Something must be at stake here. Or unfolding against a backdrop of something. Be sweeping; use the word "sweeping" if necessary.)
- 6. Move a lot of stuff around.
- 7. Order up a mountain of new reporting. Could something unlikely possibly happen? Why? Why not? Who hasn't commented on this?
- 8. Now cut this all out for space.
- 9. Cut the kicker. If the reporter left it for the end it couldn't be important.
- 10. Hold the story.

RESOURCE

Women in the newsroom: Breaking in, looking back

The recently completed Washington Press Club Foundation oral history project on women in the news business offers an unusual cache of journalism history. Transcripts of fifty-six interviews with journalists — ranging from Jane Eads, who began her career as a proofreader in 1918, to CBS news anchor Connie Chung — provide a rich vein of information about the professional and personal lives of the women who pioneered in America's newsrooms. Here is Beth Campbell Short, who in 1936 became the only female reporter in the fifty-six-person Washington bureau of The Associated Press, telling about her first day on the job, and Virginia Pitt Sherlock, who worked for the AP some forty years later, telling about the reasons for a major sex discrimination suit against the wire service. And here is Vivian Castleberry, women's editor at the *Dallas Times Herald* from 1956 to 1984, telling how, in order to convince her editors to let the section do substantive stories, she had to show them that other newspapers' women's sections were doing it. And how "as soon as that subject would become credible, city side would take it over."

Racial as well as gender bias figures in some interviews. Broadcaster Carole Simpson recalls reading an account of a late-1980s plane crash in Brazil. Simpson, noted for her crisp diction, flubbed a line, saying what sounded like "twenty nine were afeared dead." The next day she received a memo saying that "racial colloquialisms" were inappropriate for broadcasts. She describes her reaction on tape:

When I go on television I feel I'm representing every African-American. . . . I feel this pressure to be good, to be excellent, every time I appear, that people are not only measuring me but everybody, and if my stuff is good, then it makes it easier for other people. So if this guy doesn't know that I enunciate and pronounce things . . .

Simpson went to see the memo writer, stood in his doorway and said: "Massa Armstrong, I's afeared I's done sompin' turrible wrong." . . . And I start shuffling into his office, scratching my head and saying, "I's afeared I's done sompin' turrible, and I's done embarrassed ABC."

Then she slammed the memo onto his desk: "How dare you? How dare you insult me by suggesting that I don't know better than to say something like this . . ."

The main repository for the material is the Oral History Research Office at Columbia University's Butler Library. For a list of the fifteen other repositories around the country, call the foundation at (202) 393-0613.

Kay Mills

Mills is the author of *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Page and From Pocahontas to Power Suits: Everything You Need to Know About Women in America's History, to be published in March.*

SOUNDBITE

"You will never be [the media's] friends. They don't want to be your friends. . . . For the next two years, you and Newt and whoever the presidential nominee is, are going to be the recipients of the biggest media anal exam that has ever been given in American history. Clinton's had his, and it's get-even time."

Rush Limbaugh, in a Baltimore address to new Republican members of the 104th Congress.

FOLLOW UP

Berlusconi's untamed press

Silvio Berlusconi still controls virtually all of Italy's nongovernmental TV, a sizable chunk of the print media, one of the two largest publishing companies, as well as a vast array of retail, insurance, and sports franchises. He is still the leader of the most popular political party — Forza Italia — even though he resigned as prime minister last December. He could rise again to power, and many Italians still worry about how Berlusconi's media cover Berlusconi (see "Italy's New Hall of Mirrors," *CJR*, July/August).

So when Berlusconi stepped down after a stormy seven-month reign, it came as some surprise that one of the first major publicity nightmares to face him should have come from the flagship of his own publishing fleet, *Panorama*, Italy's leading newsweekly. Forza Italia — according to a *Panorama* scoop — had received a sizable block of Mafia-controlled votes in the March 1994 elections. The Mafia has long controlled a major block of votes in the Sicilian region, and is widely believed to use them to control politicians. For Berlusconi's "new-broom-

sweeps-clean" party, this was a crushing accusation.

Rival magazines dismissed the scoop. "Berlusconi has been considering replacing [*Panorama* editor in chief Andrea] Monti for some time with somebody closer to him politically," says Leo Sisti, a leading investigative journalist for the rival newsweekly *L'Espresso*. "This scoop was actually a way for Monti to make it difficult to fire him."

Liana Milella, author of the article, which was based on newly released Mafia wiretaps, was irritated by the elaborate plot-weaving of her journalistic rivals. "Look, you can't commission a scoop," she said. "We found this material, spoke to Monti about it on the Tuesday, wrote the article on Wednesday, and printed on Thursday. The only thing Monti wanted to know was where the documents came from, and were they authentic. Whether Monti had ulterior motives in his heart, I don't know. But he hired me as an investigative journalist, not as a puppet."

*Antony Shugaar
Shugaar writes frequently about Italy.*

Thanks to an idea from the Globe, more voters in Massachusetts knew the score than anywhere else

Helping voters make "an informed choice" in the voting booth — part of the job of the press — took on new meaning in Massachusetts in the '94 elections, thanks to a unique media effort spawned by The Boston Globe.

With Republican Mitt Romney challenging Democratic veteran Sen. Ted Kennedy, the Bay State Senate race was one watched by the nation. But no one *heard* anything. Throughout the campaign, Romney and Kennedy debated about debates, but nothing happened. No debates. No substance.

Until the Globe stepped in with an extraordinary idea.

Putting aside competitive differences, the Globe approached the Boston Herald with the plan of co-sponsoring debates. Backed by seven area television and radio stations that agreed to broadcast the encounters, this

ELECTION
94

unusual collaboration broke the logjam over debates and put Kennedy and Romney face to face to talk about the issues — in not one but two debates. An election victory for the voters.

The result: Bay State citizens were more informed when they went to the polls. An

analysis of 12 states by the Times Mirror Center for The People & The Press, based on exit polling, showed that more voters in Massachusetts than anywhere else — 89 percent — felt they had learned enough about the candidates and the issues in the race to make an "informed choice" in the voting booth.

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THE GREAT HEALTH CARE REFORM DEBATE THAT WASN'T.

"Media in the Middle: Fairness and Accuracy in the 1994 Health Care Reform Debate" is a special report from The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. This report also includes a videotape of the television special "The Great Health Care Debate" with Bill Moyers and Kathleen Hall Jamieson originally broadcast on

the PBS network, and a videotape of a symposium held at the National Press Club with health care reform advertisers and the media. For a free copy of the report write or fax your request on business or publication letterhead to: Films for the Humanities & Sciences, POB 2053 Princeton, New Jersey 08543. Fax: (609) 275-3767.

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Darts & Laurels

◆ **DART** to the Milledgeville, Georgia, *Union-Recorder*, and to the *New York Post*, for want of professional manners. The *Union-Recorder's* November 10 story on how a local U.S. attorney had intervened in a state criminal investigation to get a longtime district attorney off the hook for alleged sexual harassment gave not so much as a nod to the *Fulton County Daily Report*, a legal paper in Atlanta, which, after finally winning its open-records fight with Georgia authorities, had published reporter Emily Heller's highly detailed exposé on November 7. Similarly, the *New York Post's* November 18 shocker that "Thousands of leftover meals are poisoned and discarded daily by the city's public schools" avoided any reference to Elizabeth Trostler's page-one special report in the November 11 *Riverdale Press* — a report that the *Press* had sent around to New York's major dailies in an effort to rouse concern. (The *Post* was roused enough to slug the story POST EXCLUSIVE.)

◆ **DART** to the Waterbury, Connecticut, *Republican-American* and to the Springfield, Illinois, *State Journal-Register*, for electing to take the low road in the 1994 campaign. In a red-baiting page-one story on November 5, three days before readers would go to the polls, the *Republican-American* breathlessly bannered the sinister findings of an intense round-the-clock investigation — namely, that Democratic gubernatorial candidate Bill Curry (then leading against Republican John Rowland, the paper's favorite) had once been involved in a U.S. political action committee of the "Soviet-supported" nuclear freeze movement. Meanwhile, the *Journal-Register* had given its hearty endorsement to Republican Representative Karen Hasara in an editorial published on October 17 — two days before her Democratic challenger was scheduled to meet, at the paper's invitation, with its editorial board. "Your staff tells me that the editorial was mistakenly published before I had the opportunity to interview with your paper," Ellen Schanzle-Haskins wrote in a letter to the editor published on October 20. "That tells me the interview would not have mattered, as the endorsement had already been written. I had thought newspapers were supposed to be fair and consider both candidates before making an endorsement."

◆ **DART** to Sonja Hillgren, Washington editor of *Farm Journal* and vice president of the National Press Club; Bob Quinn, farm reporter for WHO radio in Des

Moines; Nancy Dunne, of *Financial Times*; and Dyanna Decola, of *Ag Day*, a daily farm program produced by WNDU-TV of South Bend, Indiana, for spreading ethical blight. They and some half-dozen other "selected members of the media" accepted an invitation from Olchak Market Research to participate in a "new learning methodology" designed to "help DuPont" develop new public relations policies for pesticides; "after the research session," the invitation promised, "there will be a press conference where you will be privileged to the nature [sic] of these DuPont goals." (It also promised that participants would reap a reward of \$250, to be donated to a designated charity or provided to the journalist "in cash for any purpose you wish to use it for, professionally or personally.") According to the newsletter *Environment Writer*, which unearthed the story in its February issue, the research session involved, among other "methodologies," reporter-teams creating before a one-way mirror dramatic plots based on the proposition that, as one remorseful participant put it, "DuPont makes very wonderful chemicals and no one needs to worry."

◆ **LAUREL** to the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* and reporters Joel Rutchick and Timothy Heider, for a bullish approach to the political marketplace. When in the course of last fall's campaign for Ohio's Tenth Congressional District seat the incumbent, Republican Martin Hoke, accused his challenger, Cuyahoga County Treasurer Francis E. Gaul, of mismanaging public funds, Rutchick and Heider didn't write off the charges as low-interest political rhetoric; instead, they checked them out. The result of their inquiry, which involved retaining the services of a university business professor and a computer-assisted analysis of some 1,800 transactions in the treasurer's \$1.8 billion investment pool known as the Secured Assets Fund Earnings (ironically, SAFE), was a page-one story in the Friday, October 7 *PD*. It revealed, among other things, that Gaul and his staff of inexperienced, unschooled, and untrained appointees (the chief investment officer, for instance, had previously worked as a supermarket stock boy and shipping clerk) had exposed hundreds of millions of public dollars to risk by borrowing against bondholdings to buy other securities; had concealed more than \$185 million in such leverages from auditors and consultants; and had been engaged in a trading frenzy that turned the portfolio over ten times in one year and netted local brokers more than \$2 million in fees at a time when the

bond market was in its worst downturn in half a century. By Tuesday, October 11, Heider and Rutchick were able to report that county commissioners had shut down the SAFE program, had brought in a team of experts to manage all investments, and were crediting the PD with staving off financial catastrophe. For contrast, consider the case of Orange County, California, where last spring similar predictions of impending financial doom were being fired into the political air by John Moorlach, the (losing) candidate for county treasurer, and where bearish local news organizations chose not to follow the smoke. Perhaps an analysis of the situation, published in *The Orange County Register* on December 11, five days after the county had fallen into bankruptcy, tells the story best. As an editor's note points out, the piece had been written earlier, "before the county admitted its investment pool had dropped \$1.5 billion in value." The note does not point out, however, that the paper had had the piece in its possession since October, at which time Moorlach had submitted it for publication without the courtesy of a reply.

◆ **MINI-DART** to the Los Angeles *Daily News*, for forgetting that a rose by any similar name may, journalisticly speaking, stink. Consider the headline topping its October 26 report on the controversial endorsement by state Superior Court Judge Lance Ito (then presiding over the preliminary proceedings in the sensational O.J. Simpson double-murder trial) of deputy district attorney James R. Simpson (an old friend of Ito's who was then campaigning for a judgeship on Glendale's Municipal Court and whose name, as the story stressed, had acquired a certain recognition value): ITO ATTENDS FUND-RAISER FOR SIMPSON.

◆ **LAUREL** to *Free Times*, an alternative weekly in Cleveland, and to *Westword*, an alternative weekly in Denver, for remembering what they are supposed to be an alternative to. In the September 14 edition, *Free Times* assistant editor Mark Naymik provided an unsettling look at how, with more than a little help from their friends in the news media, Cleveland's business leaders rebuilt its image from national joke to the place to be. Tracing the flood of "slobber and gush" articles from the time that Tom Vail, then publisher of *The Plain Dealer*, began the New Cleveland Campaign, through the targeting of journalists in New York, Washington, and other media centers, and the encouragement of articles, opinion pieces, ads, and advertorials in outlets ranging from *USA Today* and *Fortune* to *CBS This Morning* and *PrimeTime Live*, Naymik concludes that "by counting news clips, new buildings, and tourists, Cleveland clearly emerges as a Comeback City. But by counting poverty rates, population, and job loss, and considering the state of city services, Cleveland is on a downward spiral. Just

ask the city residents who live there."

Similarly, while the planned new Denver International Airport sent most of the local media straight up to Cloud Nine, *Westword* has, month after month and year after year, kept its feet on the ground, reporting on the studies that correctly predicted the problems, prodding the major papers to face the facts, scolding this anchor and that for lending their images to DIA brochures and their voices to the DIA people-mover. "If [the media] had done their jobs," ran one typical column by the relentless Pat Calhoun, "someone might have figured out a little sooner that problems of disastrous proportions plagued the new airport."

◆ **DART** to *60 Minutes*'s Mike Wallace, for ambushing his own troops. Picking up on a story by free-lance journalist Karon Haller about a 1991 assisted suicide that had run last August in *Connecticut* magazine — a story that had taken on added dimension when *The New York Times* reported in October that Haller had voluntarily turned over to prosecutors notes and tapes of her non-confidential interviews with the man who was subsequently charged with second-degree manslaughter for helping his terminally ill father die — Wallace asked if the journalist would give him a hand with his research and drop by his office for a talk, a request she readily agreed to so long as she would not appear on camera. That condition notwithstanding, as a tip to *The Washington Post* soon made clear, the Wallace-Haller talk was in fact taped, without her knowledge and in obvious violation of basic journalistic practice, by tiny cameras hidden in the office drapes. "I thought it was strange," the betrayed Haller told Howard Kurtz of the *Post*, "that he would have makeup on his hands and face and it was only 10:30 in the morning." (According to *Electronic Media*, Wallace, who claimed he had intended to get Haller's permission later, was reprimanded by network bosses; the tape, never broadcast, has been destroyed.)

◆ **DART** to the *Journal American*, Bellevue, Washington, for playing Santa to a department-store advertiser. So stirred was the paper by the vision of the reopening of a newly expanded Nordstrom's that it heralded the event in a four-day celebration marked by page-one plums, inside goodies, and full-page, four-color "shoppers' guides" to the eateries, escalators, merchandise, and restrooms. As the *Puget Sound Business Journal* later revealed, so delighted by the coverage was the company that, as publisher Peter Horvitz put it in a jubilant memo to the staff, "At the opening breakfast Jim Nordstrom, co-chairman of Nordstrom's, remarked that the *Journal American*'s advertising and news cooperation and support was as good as they've ever seen."

This column is compiled and written by Gloria Cooper, CJR's managing editor, to whom nominations should be addressed.

CAN WE AFFORD HUMAN RIGHTS?

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March 1

Market Reform and the Politics of Russia's Economic Transition

Panel:

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March 22

South Africa: Difficult Transition from Sanctions to Development

Panel:

Dr. Pauline Baker, Georgetown University; David N. Dinkins, Columbia University; Randall Robinson, Trans Africa; Ambassador Franklin A. Sonn, Embassy of South Africa; Moderator: Anthony Marx, Columbia University

April 5

Trade, Foreign Investment and Human Rights in China

Panel:

Calman Cohen, Emergency Committee for American Trade; Jerome A. Cohen, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison; David Rothkopf, U.S. Department of Commerce; David Schlesinger, Reuters; Moderator: Richard Dicker, Human Rights Watch

April 19

Population Control and Women's Rights

Panel:

Jose Barzelatto, Ford Foundation; Werner Fournos, The Population Institute; Lynn Freedman, Reproductive Rights Project; Betsy Hartmann, Hampshire College; Moderator: Stephen L. Isaacs, Professor of Public Health, Columbia University

May 3

Environmental Protection vs. Development in Brazil

Panel:

Jason Clay, World Wildlife Fund; Gilberto Mestrinho, former Governor, Amazonas, Brazil; Stephan Schwartzman, Environmental Defense Fund; Senator Marina da Silva, Acre, Brazil; Davi Kopenawa Yanomami, Commission for Creation of Yanomami Park; Moderator: Michael Young, Professor of Law, Columbia University

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A Generation of Vipers

Journalists and the New Cynicism

By Paul Starobin

For a funny, grabby, irreverent, deconstruction of a politician, "The Boy in the Bubble," Michael Lewis's *New Republic* cover story on Dan Quayle of a few years back, was hard to beat. Tracking Quayle on the 1992 campaign trail, the sharp-eyed Lewis hunted for examples that portrayed the vice-president as phony and empty. He found plenty: one vignette

sketched Quayle at the door of his airplane pointing to a nonexistent booster on the ground — a stunt performed for the television cameras trained on him. "This is meant to convey the idea of a dynamic young leader bonding with a prized supporter," Lewis wrote. "And it does, unless you see him do it five times in two days, often as not to the backside of a member of the Secret Service."

The cynic, to whom



Michael Lewis

“Do I believe that a lot of people’s motives are base? Yes. If you dig, you usually can find a selfish motive”

Lewis certainly managed to avoid the trap of a journalist becoming too cozy with the subject. But as he admits without apology, the casual disdain is rooted in a deep and abiding cynicism, a reflexive suspicion of face-value explanations, an inclination to ascribe ignoble motives. Not once does the piece suggest that Quayle might have a serious idea in his head. And that’s a problem: the cynicism constricts the coverage. This is a problem that affects more than reporters and editors. Critics are beginning to fear that cynical press coverage is helping to create a nation of cynics. “News that incessantly and unjustifiably labels political leaders as insincere and inept fosters mistrust on the part of the public, and makes it harder for those in authority to provide the leadership that is required if government is to work effectively,” Thomas E. Patterson, a Syracuse University political scientist, declares in *Out of Order*, his recent book on press coverage of the political system.

Journalists are thinking about press cynicism too. Some of them acknowledge being cynical, but say they don’t think it much affects their coverage. Others, including Lewis, extol cynicism as an outlook that produces good journalism. But in dozens of interviews, mostly around Washington, press cynicism’s ground zero, many reporters and editors echo Patterson’s concern. “One of the reasons that people are cynical about the process” and widely believe that government doesn’t work, says Steve Berg, a national correspondent for the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, is that “we tell them that every day.”

Cynicism can mean different things to different people. Perhaps the most useful way to think about it is in terms of points on a spectrum. On one extreme is credulousness — a ready willingness to take things at face value even if the evidence is slim. In the middle is skepticism — a disinclination to take things at face value, but not a prejudice against the

face-value explanation. On the other extreme is cynicism — a prejudice against the face-value explanation bordering on disbelief, accompanied by a ready willingness to ascribe base motives.

Cynicism can lead to a variety of journalistic sins, including sins of omission. Consider, for example, pre-election coverage of Newt Gingrich’s “Contract with America.” Mainstream Washington news outlets largely treated the contract as a partisan stunt aimed at putting Democrats on the spot. Even though Republicans, on the day the contract was announced, made available to the press a five-pound package of materials that included copies of the proposed legislation itself, there was scant explanation in the press of what was actually in the contract. “We were being cynical,” says Karen Hosler, a veteran congressional correspondent, of the thin coverage of her own paper, the Baltimore *Sun*. “We just thought it was a campaign trick, a gambit.”

The *Sun* had plenty of company. The *Los Angeles Times*, for instance, weighed in on September 28, the day after the contract’s unveiling, with a story by Washington reporter William J. Eaton. In the second paragraph, Eaton listed three of the ten items in the contract; the next seven paragraphs discussed the tactical dimensions of the move and the Democratic denunciation of the pact, followed by two paragraphs listing a few other key provisions; the final seven paragraphs returned to the political-gamesmanship theme.

There was, of course, a political-tactic dimension to the story — but that wasn’t the only one, or even the most important. This was dense, unsexy stuff, but the Republicans were proposing a radical overhaul of the government, and citizens needed first to hear about it without prejudice of its prospects or the motives of its crafters. (Plenty of time for that later.) Cynicism isn’t the only explanation for the sketchy coverage of the contract, but it certainly looks like a prime factor. Cynicism in this instance didn’t serve a useful role of protecting reporters — and thus the public — from being fooled by press manipulators; it kept the reporters from doing their jobs more diligently.

If you are a cynic, certain kinds of information

Paul Starobin writes for the National Journal in Washington. This article was adapted from a discussion paper commissioned by New York University’s Project on Public Life and the Press, which is supported by the Kettering Foundation.

MICHAEL GRECCO/STYVA

almost nothing is sacred . . .

— such as the first reports of Hillary Clinton's commodity trades, which some interpreted as evidence of hypocrisy and which produced a White House press frenzy — are likely to be more salient than are other kinds, say, for example, Bill Clinton's bill to establish a National Services program. *Newsweek* reporter Steven Waldman, who followed that legislation and wrote a book about it, *The Bill*, concluded that cynicism, "not liberalism, is the dominant ideology of the Washington press corps." Over the course of the year that the president spent advancing what he viewed as a major effort, Waldman writes, Clinton wasn't asked a single question about national service at a press conference. Reporters "truly believe that the politicians will trumpet the good news, so it is up to the journalists to find the bad. By that logic, anything the president pushes, the press should duly ignore." Waldman writes that White House reporters "live in desperate fear of being labeled 'in the tank' — blindly pro-Clinton . . . Many feared that writing seriously about something as nakedly idealistic as national service would make them seem naive."

Cynicism can also produce sins of commission — wrongful statements that feed unjustifiably negative impressions of government. Consider the knee-jerk media assumption that presidents and other politicians do not keep their promises. "It happens every election year," CBS anchor Dan Rather said in a typical post-election statement on his broadcast. "Politicians promise the voters change, real change, but before long, it's business as usual." Yet Clinton, for example, has kept a great many of his promises, Syracuse's Patterson points out, including those to raise taxes on the wealthy, pass a family-leave bill, end the ban on abortion counseling in family-planning programs, and enact the North American Free Trade Agreement. And although they are encountering plenty of obstacles, even from within their own ranks, House Republican leaders are moving aggressively on their Contract with America. The assumption that all political rhetoric is empty is just plain wrong.

Cynicism sometimes yields coverage, such as Lewis's Quayle piece, that can be great fun to read and selectively true, yet indulges in

blithe contempt for the political scene. Take the withering *oeuvre* of Maureen Dowd, the veteran Washington-based *New York Times* reporter recently named to replace Anna Quindlen as a *Times* op-ed columnist. *The Washington Post's* Ruth Marcus, a White House reporter, calls Dowd "the best-known practitioner of a whole school of cynicism" that flavors the Style feature section of the *Post* and such publications as *Vanity Fair*. The school has "produced some really good journalism," Marcus says, but "there certainly is a high cynicism quotient."

Consider the now-famous lead, so delicious, yet so dismissive and reductive, of Dowd's front-pager last June on a trip by President Clinton to Oxford University: "President Clinton returned today for a sentimental journey to the university where he didn't inhale, didn't get drafted, and didn't get a degree." In a recent *New Yorker* essay by critic Adam Gopnik, the lead was cited as an example of a "malicious manner" that now permeates reporting by jaded, cynical reporters. Dowd's sharp wit, of course, is a wonderful asset for any writer. Her Oxford lead was certainly more grabby and entertaining than the straightforward, gentle dispatch of White House reporter Ann Devroy of *The Washington Post*: "President Clinton ended his D-Day anniversary tour of Europe today with a nostalgic stop at Oxford University, defying the ghosts of his youth to revisit the campus where he struggled to avoid military service in Vietnam." Still, the Dowd formula can get pretty old. Her eye locks onto tell-tale marks of hypocrisy that are certainly not missing from the Washington scene, but are only one aspect of it.

The embodiment of a kind of hip jadedness on Washington is *The New Republic*, widely read by journalists for, among other charms, its frequent, witty put-downs of the political class. Senior editor Lewis proudly calls the publication "probably the most cynical magazine" among "respectable" publications. "It treats its subjects more harshly," he says. "The difference between the way people present themselves [in public life] and the way they're presented [in the press] is probably the greatest in *The New Republic*." In a cover story two years ago, Lewis wrote,

"One of the reasons that people are cynical about the process" and widely believe that government doesn't work is that "we tell them that every day," says Steve Berg of the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*

... can't reconcile a

tongue only a bit in cheek, "in praise of cynicism." He said: "The cynic sees the world as a vast comic tableau. The distance he puts between himself and others saves him time, money, anxiety, and a great deal of moral indignation." Lewis says he was sent a highly complimentary note on the piece by *New York* magazine's editor-in-chief, Kurt Andersen, a *Spy* magazine founder and pooh-bah of smart-ass American journalism.

Cynical attitudes on the part of Washington reporters are certainly not a new thing. In 1882, twenty-seven-year-old Frank G. Carpenter was assigned to cover the capital by his paper, the *Cleveland Leader*; ten years later he told his readers, "A few members of Congress are really great men, but these I can count on my fingers. A few more are noble and upright, and now and then you will find one who casts his vote for the country's good, and not just because it will benefit himself. Most of the others swell about and pose as great men. I suppose they feel great, except at election time when they drink, truckle, and bootlick to maintain their greatness. Congressional greatness — faugh!"

"The press has always been cynical," says Deborah Howell, Washington bureau chief of Newhouse News Services. "I'm the daughter of a newspaperman and grew up in a newspaper household. There's nothing new here." Although she disapproves of it, she cites the "old line" in press circles: "The only way to look at a politician is down."

But cynical attitudes have arguably become more intense in recent years as part of a migration by journalists away from honest skepticism. In any event, yesterday's reporters mostly confined their cynical comments to the barrooms; today's stick them in their copy.

In a *Newsweek* column last year, Meg Greenfield, the longtime editorial-page editor of *The Washington Post*, defended cynical attitudes on the part of both the press and the public as "the only sane and prudent response to the world around them." Citing Vietnam, Watergate, and the savings-and-loan scandal, Greenfield said that cynicism "is essentially a function of cumulative experience."

There's plenty to be said for that explanation.

But it is not sufficient. Talk to enough journalists, and you will discover that there are a variety of pathways that wind up at press cynicism. Here are a few of them:

Cabin Cynicism

Newsrooms and press packs can be breeders of cynicism. Many journalists describe a kind of chemical reaction that takes place when they cluster in groups — a catalytic conversion that gets reporters thinking cynically, or more cynically, about their subjects. Although reporters are not children, the powerful peer pressures that many children experience also exert a tug in press groups. It "goes back to junior high," the *Sun's* Hosler says. "You don't really want to say that you liked your civics class, because everyone would laugh you out of homeroom. That's not cool." In journalism, "You don't want to sound like you're naive — like, 'Oh my, you bought that story? You dope. You really think that Gingrich cares about people?'"

Before joining *U.S. News & World Report* in the mid-1980s, David Whitman wrote public-policy case studies for the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He enjoyed the intellectual give and take of discussion about policy issues, and recalls some early warning signals during his transition to journalism. Shortly after he arrived in Washington, he attended a Senate hearing on the confirmation of a Reagan administration Justice Department nominee whose conservative views on affirmative action were under attack by liberals in Congress. The debate interested Whitman, but he didn't detect much curiosity on the part of his fellow reporters. "There were a lot of snide jokes about the committee members and Strom Thurmond," the former Senate Judiciary Committee chairman, he recalls. "It was clearly an environment that encouraged you to scoff at what was going on . . . It certainly wasn't an environment in which I felt encouraged to volunteer potentially wide-eyed statements." These days, Whitman considers himself a skeptic, not a cynic, and he notes he hasn't spent much time over the years hanging around with other



Meg Greenfield

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reporters. "I wasn't very good at becoming one of the guys," he says.

The White House press corps, commonly cited by Washington journalists as the most cynical press corps in the cynical city of Washington, also operates in the most cabin-like conditions. At the White House, reporters are confined to warrens in the West Wing. On presidential trips, the groups pile together on planes and buses for long hours at a time. "Have you ever been on a White House press plane?" asks the *Washington Post's* Marcus. "It is like junior high school. I have never met a group of people who complain more about what they are doing. It's an ethos of disgruntlement — of which cynicism is a part. And in the group ethos, naïvete is just the hugest sin of all. Nothing could make you look more stupid than saying, 'I think, gee, they're doing this because they're right.' There's almost a bidding war of cynicism. It's good to be more cynical."

Cabin culture isn't limited to Washington. *New York Newsday* columnist Gail Collins, who writes frequently about New York state and local politics and began her career covering the Connecticut statehouse in Hartford, says a cynical atmosphere often pervades groups of state capital and city hall reporters. "You really look like a fool if you take the issues seriously," Collins says. And, "Anytime you write something that is really, really positive about a politician, unless he's dead — everyone in the community of journalism says, 'God, did you see how they're sucking up to that person?'"

In fact, *The New Republic* runs a "Clinton Suck-Up Watch" and a "Gingrich Suck-Up Watch" that lists crimes of exuberance committed by reporters and others who write or speak favorably of the president or the House speaker. What reporter wants to find his name on this honor roll?

Waterfront Cynicism

Waterfront cynicism is the tug exerted by long years of hanging around the political world's equivalent of the docks. The dynamic works this way: a reporter starts a career with the sort of skepticism — honest doubt —

that is widely touted by role-model professionals as the ideal for the craft. The reporter isn't particularly disposed toward grand illusions about human nature and isn't particularly interested in the pursuit of journalism as a way to expose its dark side either. Nevertheless, after the usual exposure to folly and misdeed, to crooks and charlatans, the reporter feels the pull of cynicism. It's worth noting that, in several dozen interviews, no journalist reported becoming less cynical over a lifetime of reporting.

"Over the course of the years — the fifteen years that I've been in Washington — I've become more cynical about the political process," says Pamela Fessler, a national desk editor for National Public Radio who started her career in the mid-1970s. She also believes that the political system has become more corrupt over that time. Marcus of *The Washington Post*, who has worked in journalism since 1979 and at the *Post* since 1984, says, "I find myself rarely believing that people are doing things just because they are the right thing to do. I don't know whether that's cynicism or experience." Similarly, Berg of the *Star Tribune* says of congressional coverage, "I think there is a tendency to assume the worst about people's motives. A lot of it comes from evidence that people in Congress have bad motives."

Washington journalists, after all, are frequently given cynical explanations of the behavior of public officials by their trusted insider sources in public officialdom. "You can hardly immerse yourself in this kind of stuff without being bathed in a cynical, realpolitik analysis," says Dennis Farney, a Kansas-City based *Wall Street Journal* reporter who spent many years in Washington covering the White House and Congress. "I'm not sure we're as cynical as the people we cover."

In both those institutions, say journalists who cover them, lying to reporters is common, and there are unceasing and often heavy-handed attempts to persuade the press of a particular point of view, which can have the perverse effect of tempting resentful reporters not to look at the substance. At the Supreme Court, which doesn't have an aggressive press-spin strategy and which has been largely free of scandal in its history,



Maureen Dowd

Her eye locks onto telltale marks of hypocrisy that are certainly not missing from the Washington scene, but are only one aspect of it

... of mankind with

reporters aren't particularly cynical, according to a journalist who covers the institution.

Because the working conditions of congressional and White House reporters also powerfully nurture Cabin Cynicism, it is tough to separate the pull of the Waterfront and Cabin varieties. Probably the two influences complement each other. "I think the group has become cynical for a reason, but group cynicism does reinforce itself," Marcus of *The Washington Post* says.



Deborah Howell

"If I had a reporter who was a total cynic, I wouldn't have him or her around"

The Devil's Cynicism

In *The Devil's Dictionary*, first published in 1906 as *The Cynic's Word Book*, the journalist, short-story writer, and critic Ambrose Bierce defined a cynic as "a blackguard whose faulty vision sees things as they are, not as they ought to be. Hence the custom among the Scythians of plucking out a cynic's eye to improve his vision."

Lewis of *The New Republic* offers himself and his work as an embodiment of this type of cynicism. Thirty-four years old, he grew up in New Orleans, a community of "sweet-natured cynics" who have a live-and-let-live attitude toward their fellow creatures that contains no great expectations and few illusions. "I was raised by a cynic, a very persuasive one," Lewis says, "my father," and a cynic is "what I strive to be." He adds: "Do I believe that a lot of people's motives are base? Yes. If you dig, you usually can find a selfish motive. I must say, a lot of my cynicism has been borne out. You start with a suspicion and ask lots of questions." Lewis says that beneficial creations of mankind such as capitalism are premised "on a very cynical view of human nature" and thus "it amazes me that cynicism has such a bad name." And "if a cynic is bitter it is because he is disillusioned. And he can only be disillusioned if he has illusions. That's a cheap cynic."

The Romantic's Cynicism

Farney of *The Wall Street Journal* suggests that journalism has always attracted a certain temperamental type to its ranks: "an idealist, or romantic idealist." And why not? Who would want journalists

(or anyone else) not to have a capacity for ideals and indignation?

But although plenty of young journalists survive encounters with the world with their ideals intact and sense of purpose healthily tempered, the collision sometimes produces for romantics a quickly-arrived-at and, often enough, quite bitter kind of cynicism, a variant, perhaps, of the waterfront genus. The telltale mark is disillusionment. Over time, romantics can come to believe that they have maintained a purity of purpose, while the world around is corrupt. They may lose perspective by becoming preoccupied with the rooting out of petty evils.

Watergate may well have been a magnet that attracted a bumper crop of romantics to journalism and particularly investigative journalism. Consider Richard Blow. After graduating from Yale University in 1986, he went to work in Washington as an investigative reporter. "I came out of Yale fairly idealistic" about the political system, he recalls. A talented reporter, he published articles in *The New Republic* and *Mother Jones*, the San Francisco-based magazine that specializes in muckraking. But his exposure to Washington soon produced disenchantment. "I was disillusioned by seeing the process by which people learn to compromise their values because they want to be liked," Blow explains. These days, Blow is the editor of *Regardie's*, a bimonthly Washington-based magazine. "I'm the most cynical person in the world," he says. "All the news in this town is manufactured and nobody believes any of it. There's no such thing as idealistic journalism in Washington. I'm cynical about Washington because the definition of success in Washington has nothing to do with accomplishments that in any forum outside the Beltway would be valued." And look, he says, "at the incredibly mediocre caliber of the politicians on the Hill. Up close and personal, they are revealed to be profoundly uninteresting and unthoughtful people whose greatest concern is the retaining of their job. That breeds a certain cynicism."

The romantic's cynicism can produce highly indignant pieces in the best tradition of exposé

belief in a higher meaning”

journalism. However, those imbued with this cynicism may be responsible for some of the scolding that elected officials get from reporters. “Any ordinary television viewer who has watched presidential news conferences over the last couple of administrations can’t have failed to pick up a tone of high-minded moral indignation in the reporters’ questions, which seem designed not so much to get at a particular fact or elicit a particular view as to dramatize the gulf in moral stature between the reporters and the president,” *The New Yorker’s* Gopnik wrote in his piece on the national news media. He characterized this attitude as sanctimony and added: “The sanctimony is frequently hard to tell from the cynicism, of course; they sometimes sound like different names for the same thing.”

Marketplace Cynicism

Early in her career as a statehouse reporter, *Newsday* columnist Collins discovered to her chagrin that her earnest reports on the public-policy issues of the day were not being devoured by her readers. Thus began a drift toward giving her coverage a funny edge that often mocked the process of government. And, “anytime you develop an edge, and make things amusing, you sound more cynical,” she says. “Gentle irony does not work real well in this world.”

In some cases, cynical coverage may reflect not a cynical attitude on the part of the journalist toward the government but a response to what are perceived to be marketplace imperatives. The credo of Marketplace Cynicism is, “Tell Them What They Want to Hear.”

Some reporters say that cynicism sells in the marketplace of ideas in the newsroom. “If there’s a choice between a story with a pure motive and a story with a cynical motive, they [the editors] are going to choose the cynical motive,” says a Washington reporter for a major national newspaper. “It’s more interesting. It’s juicy. It’s just a fact of journalistic life.”

If a “Tell Them What They Want to Hear” attitude stems from the *top* of a news organization, it is easy to see how it could make rank-

and-file reporters cynical about their jobs. Publisher John R. MacArthur of *Harper’s*, who has also worked as an investigative reporter, attributes the cynicism of reporters principally to the attitudes and principles of the owners and publishers of the news media. “A media company, newspaper, or TV network with an idealistic, uncynical, and principled owner does not have cynical reporters,” MacArthur says. “The principles get inculcated in the organization.”

Off the Waterfront

It is tempting to view press cynicism as at worse a benign occupational hazard and at best a protective device that has long served the profession well by keeping reporters from becoming the house pets of government officials and other press manipulators. Moreover, reasoning along diabolically cynical lines can help a reporter form a hypothesis that bears investigative fruit. Given the choice between a credulous, wide-eyed journalist and a leathery, cynical one, anyone would take the cynical model. Meanwhile, press bashing has become trendy; accusations of press cynicism are sometimes leveled by cynical politicians who view an unpopular press as a handy foil. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, for example, has a long history of both flogging the press as cynical and manipulating it to accomplish his agenda.

Nevertheless, press cynicism is clearly a real problem — certainly a problem in Washington, the primary focus of this exploration. Even though it is understandable, a migration from skepticism to cynicism has not served the cause of journalism well. Cynicism can be a lazy substitute for curiosity, and in its most corrosive form, it can produce journalists who have a diminished view of their profession and of themselves. Worse, it can damage readers and viewers and thus, democracy.

The different pathways to cynicism themselves suggest some palliatives. The best cure for the Romantic’s Cynicism is probably time (or maybe therapy). If the problem is Cabin Cynicism or Waterfront Cynicism (and often it

“If there’s a choice between a story with a pure motive and a story with a cynical motive, editors are going to choose the cynical motive,” says a reporter

may be both), then the obvious solution is to spend less time in the cabin and less time hanging around the waterfront. Berg of the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* says reporters shouldn't concentrate so heavily on coverage of the Machiavellian maneuvers of political insiders in Washington. He's practicing this advice himself, in fact. He recently journeyed through the South to interview ordinary citizens about the ideas they have about government. "I want to sort of let them talk," he says. Tom Hamburger, the Washington bureau chief of the *Star Tribune*, says his paper is considering major changes of coverage of national policy issues to focus on proposed solutions to the problems. For example, the paper may have its reporters look at how other countries have dealt with flaws in the health-care system and with other problems that currently afflict the United States. The goal is to get away from what Hamburger calls "the operating norms" of Washington journalists.

Cynicism seems generally to ripen and intensify over the course of a Washington tour of duty, as journalistic "outsiders" become entrenched "insiders" and take on the colorations of a fairly cynical environment. So although exile from Washington probably won't arrest cynicism in journalists whose cynicism has deepened to the point of being a handicap, it might make room for fresher, less cynical replacements. At the least, editors could follow the example of Howell, the Newhouse News Service bureau chief, who says she doesn't tolerate cynical attitudes in her reporters. She says she alerts her troops to attitude problems, and "if I had a reporter who was a total cynic, I wouldn't have him or her around."

But is cynicism curable? The most negative analysis is that the cynicism of contemporary journalism is simply one facet of an increasingly cynical culture. A vicious circle may be at work: cynical coverage tai-

lored to a cynical public, which makes the public more cynical and begets more cynical coverage. Future journalists absorb cynical values through the trashy pop culture of Hollywood and Madison Avenue — these days cynicism abounds even in comic books — and thus have a tendency toward cynicism before they ever enter the cabin or the waterfront.

In his posthumously published book, *Revolt of the Elites*, the cultural historian Christopher Lasch argues that a cognitive elite of journalists — along with university professors, novelists, screenwriters, and other values-shapers — has lost its faith. *Tenured Radicals*, a 1990 book by *New Criterion* managing editor Roger Kimball, attacks the modern humanities curriculum at many universities on virtually the identical terms in which journalism is now often assaulted. Kimball writes that the analysis of cultural trends by professors has become "a species of cynicism for which nothing is properly understood until it is exposed as corrupt, duplicitous, or hypocritical." In the new *Greater Expectations*, Brown University's William Damon says that an "unwholesome environment for young people" at home and at school is producing "a cynical attitude towards moral values and goals . . . in a phrase, a failure of spirit."

The antidote for a failure of spirit would seem to be belief, an attachment to cosmic values. The cynic, to whom almost nothing is sacred, has difficulty reconciling a contemptuous distrust of mankind with belief in a high meaning to human existence.

Today's generation of cynics, in journalism and elsewhere, seems afraid to believe. Perhaps after the Kennedy assassinations, Vietnam, Watergate, they built up a defensive wall, like disappointed lovers who vow never to fall in love again. Cynicism beckons as a seductive retreat from belief, but it is also a barren spot, one that deprives the soul of sustenance. It produces little that endures. ♦

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COVERING TOBACCO

A Handbook for Journalists

This listing grew out of a year of reporting on tobacco issues for National Public Radio and The Center for Investigative Reporting. At the time I was a Kaiser Media Fellow and spent almost as much energy collecting files, sources, and ideas as I did reporting particular stories. The guide — with some oversights who will undoubtedly identify themselves — is an attempt to share some of that research.

Under the new Republican-controlled Congress, it is unlikely that there will be a lot of action on tobacco in the legislative branch this year. Litigation and regulation, however, could be an entirely different story. Special areas to watch in '95: David Kessler and FDA, OSHA, tobacco taxes to fund health care, class-action lawsuits, actions by state attorneys general, and crackdowns on access to minors.

— Rebecca Perl

KEY PLAYERS IN THE TOBACCO CONTROL MOVEMENT

Considered the most knowledgeable and important players, these people have been working on tobacco control issues for decades. For many stories they are a good place to start.

Dr. Alan Blum, chairman, Doctors Ought to Care (DOC), Baylor College of Medicine, department of family practice, 5510 Greenbriar, Houston, Tex. 77005 ♦ (713) 798-7729, fax (713) 798-7775. *Expertise:* Tobacco advertising and counter-advertising, sports sponsorship, tobacco industry philanthropy.

Blum, an associate professor of family medicine at Baylor, seems tireless. He splits his time between patients with tobacco-related diseases, lectures on tobacco advertising, and activist work, encouraging children not to smoke with some unusually colorful tactics, including counter-advertising campaigns like the Barfboro Team. Blum also collects everything and anything related to tobacco, from advertisements to promotional gifts to internal industry documents.

Key staff: Eric Solberg (tobacco politics and the federal government, sports sponsorship).

Gregory Connolly, director, Massachusetts Tobacco Control Program, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 150 Tremont St., Boston, Mass. 02111 ♦ (617) 727-0732, fax (617) 723-1659. *Expertise:* Smokeless tobacco, international tobacco issues, health issues, state smoking control, divestiture.

A dentist, Connolly now runs the country's largest per capita tobacco control program, which includes an aggressive anti-smoking media campaign and the promotion of local ordinances. He is also an expert on smokeless tobacco. In that capacity, he is a consultant to major league baseball, developing strategies to encourage ballplayers not to chew and working on policies to prohibit use in the minor leagues. An adviser on tobacco and health to the World Health Organization (WHO), Connolly has also traveled widely in Asia and Eastern Europe to develop programs to curb sales and marketing of American tobacco.

Dr. Ronald Davis, chief medical officer, Michigan Department of Public Health, 3423 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., P.O. Box 30195,

Lansing, Mich. 48909 ♦ (517) 335-8022, fax (517) 335-9476. *Expertise:* Advertising and promotion, international issues, minors' access to tobacco, health effects, secondhand smoke.

A doctor and epidemiologist, Davis used to run the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health. He now edits *Tobacco Control*, an international journal published by the British Medical Association. He is also deputy director of the Michigan Health Department. A generalist, if he doesn't know the answer, he can lead you to someone who does.

Richard Daynard, chairman, Tobacco Products Liability Project, Northeastern University School of Law, 400 Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass. 02155 ♦ (617) 373-2026, fax (617) 373-3672. *Expertise:* Litigation and tobacco product liability.

A law professor at Northeastern University School of Law, Daynard has advised or consulted with most of the plaintiff attorneys suing tobacco companies over the years and is now actively involved with a new phenomenon of class-action suits alleging that tobacco companies knew more about the addictive nature of nicotine than they admitted. Daynard edits the *Tobacco Products Litigation Reporter*.

Key staff: Mark Gottlieb (use of the Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] to protect non-smokers); Ed Sweda (lawsuits involving secondhand smoke); Graham Kelder (defending cities and towns from tobacco industry lawsuits).

Stanton Glantz, professor of medicine, University of California, division of cardiology, Box 0124, San Francisco, Calif. 94143 ♦ (415) 476-3893, fax (415) 476-0424. *Expertise:* Tobacco politics — especially in California, secondhand smoke, counter-advertising campaigns, heart disease.

A professor and a researcher, Glantz has done some of the leading studies on the health effects of secondhand smoke and on tobacco industry politics, campaign contributions, and front groups. He has also analyzed the economic impact of smoking restrictions on restaurants and other businesses.

Matthew Myers, Asbill, Junkin & Myers, 1615 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009 ♦ (202) 234-9000, fax (202) 332-6480. *Expertise:* Federal laws and regulations on tobacco, legal and tax issues, advertising, smoking in the workplace.

An attorney who has worked on most of the tobacco legislation to come out of Washington in the last decade, Myers was also in charge of the Federal Trade Commission's tobacco advertising program in the early 1980s and served for ten years as staff director of the Coalition on Smoking OR Health (made up of the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, and the American Cancer Society). He is very well plugged-in in Washington.

Mike Pertschuk, co-director, The Advocacy Institute, 1730 Rhode Island Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 659-8475, fax (202) 659-8484. *Expertise:* Advertising, federal regulation and legislation, the history of tobacco control.

As a congressional staff member in the 1960s and '70s, Pertschuk helped develop the legislation that required warning labels on cigarette packs and the broadcast advertising ban. Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission from 1977-81 and a commissioner through 1983,

This special pullout section has been supported by a grant from the Kaiser Family Foundation.

he monitored tobacco advertising. Pertschuk is an expert on the history of tobacco control efforts in this country.

The Advocacy Institute, which he founded, trains, supports, and provides information for other nonprofits to make them more effective. The institute also developed and manages SCARCNET, a computer network for tobacco control advocates, and maintains a database as well as hard copies of articles and research on tobacco control and on the industry.

Key staff: Phil Wilbur, media director (advertising, the tobacco control movement).

Donald Shopland, coordinator, National Cancer Institute, Smoking and Tobacco Control Program, 6130 Executive Blvd. MSC 7337, EPN, Room 241, Bethesda, Md. 20892 ♦ (301) 496-8679, fax (301) 496-8675. *Expertise:* Health effects, secondhand smoke, prevention and cessation policy.

Shopland has worked on every surgeon general's report to come out since the first one in 1964. He was also the acting director of the federal Office on Smoking and Health from 1985-87. Shopland has one of the best institutional memories on tobacco control.

Dr. John Slade, associate professor, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, St. Peter's Medical Center, 254 Easton Ave., New Brunswick, N.J. 08903 ♦ (908) 745-8600 ext. 8180, fax (908) 214-0566. *Expertise:* Nicotine addiction, tobacco product regulation, promotions, history.

An internist, Slade is a key organizer of an annual addiction medicine conference. He has pushed for regulation of tobacco by the Food and Drug Administration for nearly ten years and is an expert on tobacco industry promotions and marketing.

NATIONAL TOBACCO CONTROL ORGANIZATIONS

(in addition to those mentioned above)

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights, 2530 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, Calif. 94702 ♦ (510) 841-3032, fax (510) 841-7702. Julia Carol, executive director. *Expertise:* Secondhand smoke, tobacco politics.

Active on local, state, and national anti-smoking ordinances. Also works on advertising and youth access issues. Funding comes from membership and training workshops. Newsletter.

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), 2013 H St. NW, Washington D.C. 20006 ♦ (202) 659-4310, fax (202) 833-3921. John Banzhaf, executive director; Kathleen E. Scheg, legislative counsel. *Expertise:* Legal and legislative issues.

A legal-action organization that assists and pursues suits on government "inaction" on smoking control issues such as minors' access to vending machines, secondhand smoke, smokefree workplaces, restaurants, transportation, and custody issues. Banzhaf played a key role in getting legislation passed to make national airline flights smokefree and to get tobacco ads off the airwaves. Money comes from donors. Newsletter.

American Medical Association, 515 N. State St., Chicago, Ill. 60610 ♦ (312) 464-5957, fax (312) 464-4111. Dr. Thomas Houston, director of the department of preventive medicine and public health. *Expertise:* The role of doctors, tobacco, and health.

Develops policy for the AMA and for physicians on tobacco and smoking issues, writes reports on practice guidelines for doctors on helping people quit, etc. Drafts, introduces, and testifies on some tobacco legislation. Through AMA journals, holds press events on tobacco issues. Funding comes through the AMA, which has resources from grants, members, and magazine revenues.

Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse of Columbia University (CASA), 152 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019 ♦ (212)

841-5210, fax (212) 956-8020. Joseph Califano, president; Jeffrey Merrill, vice president, research and policy. (212) 841-5240. *Expertise:* Substance abuse and its cost to society.

The group does research and pilots smoking-prevention programs. Califano served under Jimmy Carter as secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare and was active on tobacco issues then. The group has databases on tobacco use, tobacco's role in causing disease, and its cost to the health care system, as well as substance abuse data in general. Funding comes from foundation grants.

Coalition on Smoking OR Health, 1150 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 822-9380, fax (202) 822-9883. Scott Ballin, chairman. *Expertise:* Federal legislation and regulation.

Composed of the American Cancer Society, the American Lung Association, and the American Heart Association, the group works to bring tobacco issues to the attention of state officials and the federal government. Funding comes from the three health organizations.

The Foundation for a Smokefree America, 505 S. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212 ♦ (310) 277-1111, fax (310) 657-1822. Patrick Reynolds, president.

The grandson of R.J. Reynolds is a lecturer and media advocate on tobacco issues including how tobacco industry money influences politicians. He has stories to tell about deaths of family members from smoking. Funding comes from foundations and private donors.

INFACT, 256 Hanover St., Boston, Mass. 02133 ♦ (617) 742-4583, fax (617) 367-0191. Elaine Lamy, executive director. *Expertise:* Campaigns to promote corporate accountability.

A membership group that made its name fighting Nestle's infant formula marketing in the third world. Now looking at marketing that may appeal to children, marketing overseas, and at the giants of the industry themselves, particularly Philip Morris and RJR Nabisco. Also behind a boycott of food products made by tobacco companies. Funding from membership and foundations. Newsletter.

Smokefree Educational Services, 375 South End Ave., New York, N.Y. 10280 ♦ (212) 912-0960, fax (212) 488-8911. Joe Cherner, president. *Expertise:* Smokefree legislation.

A grass-roots organization that works for smokefree air in public places through local, state, and federal legislation. The group also tries to point out industry advertising strategies that may appeal to children and does counter-advertising. Money comes from donors. Newsletter.

STAT (Stop Teenage Addiction to Tobacco), 511 E. Columbus Ave., Springfield, Mass. 01105 ♦ (413) 732-7828, fax (413) 732-4219. James Bergman, executive director. *Expertise:* Youth.

The group works to regulate advertising and promotions and to heighten public awareness of industry marketing practices that may target young people. It also seeks to restrict vending machines and support smokefree-community ordinances. The membership includes a hefty number of teenagers. Funding comes from foundations, donors, and the membership. Newsletter and annual conference.

STATE TOBACCO CONTROL GROUPS

To locate the state health department tobacco control expert and local groups in any state contact: **The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials**, 415 2nd St. NE, Washington, D.C. 20002 ♦ (202) 546-5400, fax (202) 544-9349. Jane Moore, director, tobacco control project.

THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY

The Tobacco Institute, 1875 I St. NW, Washington D.C. 20006 ♦ (202) 457-4800, fax (202) 457-9350. Brennan Dawson, senior vice president, (202) 457-9877; Walker Merryman, vice president, (202)

457-4871; Tom Lauria, assistant to the president, (202) 457-4847.

In most situations TI should be your first call to get the industry's side. TI represents the six major cigarette manufacturers in the United States and is authorized to speak for them. It can also put you in touch with industry scientists and scientists who have testified on the industry's behalf, as well as industry sponsored groups, such as restaurateurs opposing smokefree ordinances. All three officers listed above can answer press questions.

CIGARETTE COMPANIES

Philip Morris Cos., 120 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017 ♦ (212) 880-5000, fax (212) 967-5361. Brands: Marlboro, Virginia Slims, Benson & Hedges, Merit.

Contacts: Karen Daragon, manager, media programs, (212) 880-4146; Jack Lenzi, manager, communications for worldwide regulatory affairs, (212) 880-4119; Steve Parrish, general counsel and senior vice president for worldwide regulatory affairs, (212) 880-3074.

RJR Nabisco (Parent company), R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., 401 N. Main St., P.O. Box 2959, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102 ♦ (910) 741-7693, fax (910) 741-0881. Brands: Camel, Winston, Salem.

Contacts: Maura Ellis, senior director, public relations, (910) 741-6996; Peggy Carter, manager, media relations, (910) 741-7674; DeeDee Whitt, senior public relations representative, (910) 741-7644; Brenda Follmer, director, public relations, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco International, (910) 741-3160, fax (910) 741-1725.

Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corp., P.O. Box 35090, Louisville, Ky. 40202 ♦ (502) 568-7000. Brands: Kool, Barclay, Capri.

Contacts: Joseph Helewicz, vice president, corporate communications, (502) 568-7801, fax (502) 568-8262; Tom Fitzgerald, manager, public affairs, (502) 568-7468, fax (502) 568-7494.

American Brands (Parent company), The American Tobacco Co., P.O. Box 10380, Stamford, Conn. 06904. Brands: Carlton, Lucky Strike.

Contact: Roger Baker, director of communications ♦ (203) 698-5148, fax (203) 637-2580.

Liggett Group, P.O. Box 1572, 300 N. Duke St., Durham, N.C. 27702. Brands: Lark, Chesterfield.

Contacts: Carol Jova, manager of communications ♦ (919) 683-8992, fax (919) 683-7043.

Loews Corp. (Parent company), Lorillard Tobacco Co., One Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016 ♦ (212) 545-3000, fax (212) 545-3297. Brands: Newport, Kent.

SMOKELESS TOBACCO COMPANIES

Smokeless Tobacco Council, 1627 K. St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20006 ♦ (703) 790-1051, fax (703) 790-1052. Alan Hilburg, spokesman. Represents all U.S. smokeless tobacco manufacturers.

UST (Parent company), United States Tobacco Co., 100 W. Putnam Ave., Greenwich, Conn. 06830 ♦ (203) 622-3549, fax (203) 863-7235. Brands: Copenhagen, Skoal. Alan Kaiser, director, corporate communications.

Pinkerton Tobacco Co., 6630 W. Broad St., Richmond, Va. 23230 ♦ (804) 287-3314, (804) 287-3208. Brands: Red Man. Lisa Licata, general counsel.

INDUSTRY RESEARCH

Council for Tobacco Research, 900 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022 ♦ (212) 421-8885. Dr. James Glenn, chairman. Industry-sponsored grants to scientists to study tobacco-related issues and basic

research on cancer, etc. Some 200-plus grants are awarded each year. An annual listing of grantees and their study is available through CTR.

SMOKERS' RIGHTS GROUPS

National Smokers Alliance (NSA), 901 N. Washington St., Suite 400, Alexandria, Va. 22314 ♦ (703) 739-1324, fax (703) 739-1328. Doug MacKinnon, director of communication

Membership organization with a million-plus members, seeking to protect the rights of smokers in the workplace and other public places through accommodation and legislation. Partial funding comes from the industry. Newsletter.

(For a directory of tobacco-industry allies, organizations, scientists, lobbyists, lawyers, and public relations experts from a tobacco control point of view, contact: Phil Wilbur, The Advocacy Institute, 1730 Rhode Island Ave. NW, Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 659-8475, fax (202) 659-8484).

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Office on Smoking and Health, 4770 Buford Highway NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30341 ♦ (404) 488-5701, fax (404) 488-5767. Michael Eriksen, director; Gary Giovino, chief, epidemiology branch. Keeps track of smoking-attributable deaths each year and other epidemiological information on tobacco (percentage of women who smoke, etc.). Also produces the annual surgeon general's report on tobacco and puts out a bulletin, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*, that sometimes contains tobacco studies.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Mail Code 8602, 401 M St. SW, Washington, D.C. 20460 ♦ (202) 260-3814.

Contacts: Bob Axelrad, director, indoor air division, (202) 233-9315, fax (202) 233-9555 (policy issues); Steven Bayard, project manager, environmental tobacco smoke risk assessment, (202) 260-5722, fax (202) 260-3803 (statistics and health effects of secondhand smoke); James Repace, physicist, tel./fax (301) 262-9131 (indoor air quality and exposure).

EPA published a risk assessment on secondhand smoke which found secondhand smoke to be a human carcinogen, responsible for 3,000 lung cancer deaths a year in non-smokers. The tobacco industry has filed suit over the report. EPA also puts out consumer information on ways to minimize exposure to tobacco smoke.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA), 5600 Fishers Lane HF1, Rockville, Md. 20857 ♦ (301) 443-1130, fax (301) 594-6004. Dr. David Kessler, commissioner (to reach him call Jim O'Hara, associate commissioner for public affairs, at above number).

The FDA is considering whether cigarettes should be regulated as a drug by the agency. It already regulates other products containing nicotine such as patches, gum, and other quitting aids.

Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Division of Advertising Practices S-4002, 601 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20580 ♦ (202) 326-3150, fax (202) 326-3259. Judith Wilkenfeld, assistant director.

Oversees warning labels, advertising and advertising expenditures by the industry. Also keeps track of industry nicotine and tar reporting.

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), 200 Independence Ave. SW, Room 716G, Washington, D.C. 20201 ♦ (202) 690-7694, fax (202) 690-6960. Philip Lee, assistant secretary for health.

Oversees FDA, CDC, and the National Institutes of Health.

Department of Justice (DOJ), 10th St. and Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20530 ♦ (202) 616-2771, fax (202) 514-5331. John Russell, public affairs specialist.

Looking into whether tobacco executives committed any civil or criminal violations when they testified before Congress in 1994 about nicotine. Also investigating the industry's ability to make fire-safe cigarettes. DOJ also has responsibility for enforcing the broadcast ban and cigarette labeling laws.

National Cancer Institute (NCI) Smoking and Tobacco Control Program, 6130 Executive Blvd. MSC 7337, EPN, Room 241, Bethesda, Md. 20892 ♦ (301) 496-8679, fax (301) 496-8675. Donald Shopland, coordinator (see KEY PLAYERS).

Cancer and tobacco research. Also gives money to the states for tobacco control programs.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Addiction Research Center, 4940 Eastern Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21224 ♦ (410) 550-1494, fax (410) 550-1849. Jack Henningfield, chief, clinical pharmacology.

NIDA focuses on nicotine and addiction research and funds outside research on these subjects.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Room N-3718, Washington, D.C. 20210 ♦ (202) 219-7166, fax (202) 219-7125. Debra Janes, epidemiologist.

A division of the Department of Labor, OSHA is responsible for air quality in workplaces, including tobacco smoke pollution.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockwall 2, 9th Floor, Room 9D10, Rockville, Md. 20857 ♦ (301) 443-0365, fax (301) 443-5447. Elaine Johnson, director, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

Developing regulations to prevent minors' access to tobacco and awards community grants for tobacco prevention programs.

Office of the Surgeon General, 200 Independence Ave. SW, Room 716G, Washington, D.C. 20201 ♦ (202) 690-6467, fax (202) 690-6498.

Speaks out on tobacco issues for the government; works to protect children from tobacco.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Fourteenth and Independence, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250. Several important branches:

Agricultural Marketing Service — Grades tobacco and keeps track of market news at auction time. Larry Crabtree, deputy director ♦ (202) 205-0235, fax (202) 205-0099.

Economic Research Service — Keeps track of domestic production, policy, trade, economics, and consumption. Also puts out quarterly report *Tobacco: Situation and Outlook*. Verner Grise, tobacco group leader ♦ (202) 219-0890, fax (202) 219-0042.

Foreign Agricultural Service — Keeps track of world tobacco imports, exports, production, and trade negotiations. Also puts out a monthly bulletin, *Tobacco: World Markets and Trade*. Dan Stevens, Tobacco Group Leader ♦ (202) 720-9493, fax (202) 690-1171.

Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service — Administers the tobacco price support program, which keeps the price and supply stable by setting regulations on how much farmers can grow. ASCS also lends money to farmer associations. Robert Miller, director, tobacco and peanut analysis division ♦ (202) 720-8839, fax (202) 720-8261.

MEDICAL AND STATISTICAL HELP

American Cancer Society

In New York: 1180 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036 ♦ (212) 382-2169, fax (212) 719-0193. Joann Schellenbach, national director, media relations. Medical questions. Also puts out cancer statistics booklet every year.

In Atlanta: 1599 Clifton Rd. NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30329 ♦ (404) 329-7652, fax (404) 248-1780. Ron Todd, director, tobacco control. Policy and prevention questions.

American Lung Association, 1740 Broadway, New York, N.Y.

10019 ♦ (212) 315-6473, fax (212) 265-5642. Peter Vigliarolo, manager, public relations.

American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Ave., Dallas, Tex. 75231 ♦ (214) 706-1340, fax (214) 369-3685. Howard Lewis, director, health and science news division. Puts out annual heart disease statistics booklet.

American Health Foundation, Dana Rd., Valhalla, N.Y. 10595 ♦ (914) 592-2600, fax (914) 592-6317. Dietrich Hoffmann, associate director. Tobacco, smoking, and cancer. Hoffmann worked on many of the surgeon general's reports and is an expert on tobacco chemistry, pharmacology, and toxicology.

National Cancer Institute Donald Shopland (See KEY PLAYERS) and Larry Kessler, chief of the applied research branch. ♦ (301) 496-8500, fax (301) 496-9949. Smoking-related cancer death rates and smoking incident rates.

Office on Smoking and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 4770 Buford Highway, NE, MS K-50, Atlanta, Ga. 30341 ♦ (404) 488-5701, fax (404) 488-5848. Gary Giovino, chief, epidemiology branch; Dana Shelton, epidemiologist. Statistics and epidemiological information on who smokes, broken down by age, income, and race — and data on smoking-attributable deaths.

Dr. Jonathan Samet, Johns Hopkins University, chairman, department of epidemiology, School of Hygiene and Public Health, 615 N. Wolfe St., Suite 6039, Baltimore, Md. 21205 ♦ (410) 955-3286, fax (410) 955-0863. Expert on lung cancer and secondhand smoke.

Dimitrios Trichopoulos, professor of cancer prevention and epidemiology, Harvard School of Public Health, 677 Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass. 02115 ♦ (617) 432-4560, fax (617) 566-7805. Secondhand smoke and lung diseases.

CONGRESS

Working for Tobacco Control:

Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N. Mex.), (202) 224-5521, fax (202) 224-1810 (Carrie Billy, legislative assistant).

Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), (202) 224-3224, fax (202) 224-8567 (Wendy Rosenblum, legislative correspondent).

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), (202) 224-3254, fax (202) 224-9369 (Peter Reinecke, legislative director).

Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), (202) 224-4543, fax (202) 224-2417.

Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), (202) 224-4744, fax (202) 224-9707 (Sander Lurie, legislative assistant).

Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), (202) 225-3801, fax (202) 225-0351 (Elizabeth Douglas, legislative assistant).

Rep. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.), (202) 225-5271, fax (202) 225-0170 (Tom Faletti, legislative director).

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), (202) 225-3976, fax (202) 225-4099 (Phil Schiliro, administrative assistant).

Rep. Ron Wyden (D-Oreg.), (202) 225-4811, fax (202) 225-8941 (Josh Kardon, chief of staff).

Key Tobacco State Legislators:

Sen. Wendell Ford (D-Ky.), (202) 224-4343 (Rob Mangas, legislative director).

Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), (202) 224-6342, fax (202) 224-7588 (Brad Edwards and Paul Jimenez, agriculture legislative assistants).

Rep. Scotty Baesler (D-Ky.), (202) 225-4706, fax (202) 225-2122 (John Townsend, legislative assistant).

Rep. Thomas Bliley Jr. (R-Va.), (202) 225-2815 (Justin Cawley, legislative assistant).

Rep. Charlie Rose (D-N.C.), (202) 225-2731, fax (202) 225-0345 (Keith Pitts, staff director, (202) 225-8906).

TRACKING POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The Center for Responsive Politics, 1320 19th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20008 ♦ (202) 857-0044, fax (202) 857-7809. Josh Goldstein, director, Open Secrets Project.

The closest thing to an original source short of the Federal Election Commission. Keeps track of all federal campaign giving from PACS and large individual contributors to candidates (hard money) and political parties (soft money).

Public Citizen, Health Research Group, 2000 P St. NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 833-3000, fax (202) 452-8658. Dr. Sidney Wolfe, director.

Reports on how tobacco industry giving affects policy and law-making, including how much each legislator gets.

U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), 218 D St. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003 ♦ (202) 546-9707, fax (202) 546-2401. Ed Mierzewski, consumer program director.

Reports on tobacco PAC giving and how legislators vote.

Stanton Glantz (See KEY PLAYERS). Keeps track of industry giving in California and Massachusetts, which both have large tobacco control programs passed by the voters.

WALL STREET ANALYSTS

Rebecca Barfield, First Boston, 55 E. 52 St., 36th floor, New York, N.Y. 10055 ♦ (212) 909-3091, fax (212) 318-1204. Litigation and tobacco companies.

Gary Black, Sanford C. Bernstein & Co., 767 5th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10153 ♦ (212) 756-4197, fax (212) 756-4462. Philip Morris, RJR Nabisco.

Roy Burry, Kidder Peabody & Co., 10 Hanover Square, 15th floor, New York, N.Y. 10005 ♦ (212) 510-3780, fax (212) 510-4233. Philip Morris, RJR Nabisco.

Diana K. Temple, Salomon Brothers, 7 World Trade Center, New York, N.Y. 10048 ♦ (212) 783-6671, fax (212) 783-4644. RJR Nabisco, Philip Morris, Loews Corp. American Brands, UST.

TOBACCO ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS

Dr. Alan Blum (See KEY PLAYERS)

Dr. Paul Fischer, editor, *Journal of Family Practice*, University Family Medicine, 447 N. Belair Rd., Evans, Ga. 30809 ♦ (706) 650-7563, fax (706) 650-0512. Ad recognition (by children) and cigarette advertising, effects of warning labels.

Jean Kilbourne, visiting scholar, Wellesley College, 67 Temple St., West Newton, Mass. 02165 ♦ (617) 244-5679, fax (617) 244-4286. Women and advertising.

Rick Pollay, professor of marketing, history of advertising archives, faculty of commerce, University of British Columbia, Vancouver V6T 1Z2, Canada ♦ (604) 822-8338, fax (604) 822-8521. Advertising analysis.

Dr. John Pierce, professor of cancer research, University of California, San Diego, The Cancer Prevention Program, Mail Code 0901, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla, Calif. 92093 ♦ (619) 622-1731, fax (619) 622-1745. Effects of tobacco advertising and counter-advertising, youth.

Dr. John Slade (See KEY PLAYERS).

DIVESTING (TOBACCO STOCKS)

Dr. Alan Blum (See KEY PLAYERS).

Gregory Connolly (See KEY PLAYERS).

Rev. Michael Crosby, coordinator, tobacco program, Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, 1015 N. 9th St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53233 ♦ (414) 271-0135, fax (414) 271-0637. New York Office: Tim Smith, executive director. (212) 870-2293, fax (212) 870-2023.

Brad Krevor, executive director, Tobacco Control Resource Center, P.O. Box 15463, Kenmore Station, Boston, Mass. 02155 ♦ (617) 266-2088, fax (617) 373-3672.

Dr. John Slade (See KEY PLAYERS).

Ron Turk, founder, Students Against Tobacco Investments, 9619 Cederhurst St., Houston, Tex. 77096 ♦ (713) 723-2526. Works to get hospitals, insurance companies, universities, state boards of education, and pensions funds to sell tobacco stock.

Amy Vinroot, research analyst, Investor Responsibility Research Center, 1350 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 833-0700, fax (202) 833-3555. Impartial research for institutional investors. This group does not advocate divesting.

ECONOMICS, TOBACCO TAXES AND TRADE ISSUE

John Bloom, manager, policy development, tobacco tax policy project, American Cancer Society, 316 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003 ♦ (202) 546-4011, fax (202) 546-1682.

Matthew Myers (See KEY PLAYERS).

Rep. Ann Northup, (R-Louisville), Legislative Offices, Capitol Annex, Frankfort, Ky. 40601 ♦ (502) 564-8100, fax (502) 564-6543.

David Sweanor, senior legal counsel, Nonsmokers Rights Association, 130 Albert St., Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4, Canada ♦ (613) 230-4211, fax (613) 230-9454. Taxes and economic issues on both sides of the border.

Dr. Jeffrey Harris, economist, department of economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. 02139 ♦ (617) 253-2677, fax (617) 253-6915.

Dr. Frank Chaloupka, associate professor, economics department, M/L144, University of Illinois at Chicago, 6015 Morgan St., Chicago, Ill. 60607 ♦ (312) 996-8651, fax (312) 996-3344.

Kenneth Warner, professor and chair, department of public health policy and administration, School of Public Health, University of Michigan, 1420 Washington Heights, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48109 ♦ (313) 936-0933, fax (313) 936-0927.

FARM ORGANIZATIONS

To contact farmers:

Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association, P.O. Box 860, Lexington, Ky. 40587 ♦ (606) 252-3561, fax (606) 231-9804. Danny McKinney, c.e.o.

For growers in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee:

Tobacco Growers Information Committee, P.O. Box 10584, 1304 Annapolis Drive, Raleigh, N.C. 27608 ♦ (919) 821-0390, fax (919) 821-4564. Lisa Eddington, director.

For growers in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia:

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, division of marketing, P.O. Box 129, Halifax, Va. 24558 ♦ (804) 572-4568, fax (804) 572-8234. Stanley Duffer, regional market development manager.

TOBACCO AUCTION INFORMATION

Burley Auction Warehouse Association, 620 S. Broadway, Lexington, Ky. 40508 ♦ (606) 255-4504, fax (606) 255-4534. Denny Wilson, executive director.

Bright Belt Warehouse Association, P.O. Box 12004, 1306 Annapolis Drive, Raleigh, N.C. 27605 ♦ (919) 828-8988, fax (919) 821-2092. Mac Dunkley, managing director.

IMPORT/EXPORT

Leaf Tobacco Exporters Association, 3716 National Drive, Raleigh, N.C. 27612 ♦ (919) 782-5151, fax (919) 781-0915. Tommy Bunn,

executive vice president.

Tobacco Associates, 1725 K St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20006, Suite 512 ♦ (202) 828-9144, fax (202) 828-9149. Kirk Wayne, president. Promotes the export of tobacco on behalf of growers.

Tobacco Merchant's Association (TMA), P. O. Box 8019, Princeton, N.J. 08543 ♦ (609) 275-4900, fax (609) 275-8379. Michael Marion, media marketing manager. Import/export data, also industry news.

FARMING INFORMATION AND HISTORY

Tobacco Farm Life Museum, P.O. Box 88, Highway 301 N., Kenly, N.C. 27542 ♦ (919) 284-3431. Martha Vick, executive director.

TOBACCO LEAF TYPE INFORMATION

Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corp., P.O. Box 12300, Raleigh, N.C. 27605 ♦ (919) 821-4560, fax (919) 821-4564. Fred Bonds, c.e.o.

UNIONS

Bakery, Confectionery & Tobacco Workers International Union, 10401 Connecticut Ave., Kensington, Md. 20895 ♦ (301) 933-8600, fax (301) 946-8452. Ray Scannell, director of research.

LITIGATION

Richard Daynard (See KEY PLAYERS).

Donald Garner, professor, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, School of Law, Carbondale, Ill. 62901 ♦ (618) 453-8718, (618) 453-8769.

Robert Rabin, director, tobacco policy research & evaluation program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Stanford University Law School, Crown Triangle, Stanford, Calif. 94305 ♦ (415) 723-3073, fax (415) 725-0253.

EXPERTS ON MEDIA CONFLICTS

(Negative Stories vs. Advertising Dollars)

Kenneth Warner (See ECONOMICS, TOBACCO TAXES, AND TRADE ISSUES). Studies on how tobacco advertising affects editorial decisions.

Regina Penna, director, Women and Girls Against Tobacco, 2001 Addison St., Suite 200, Berkeley, Calif. 94704 ♦ (510) 841-6434, fax (510) 841-5044. Women's magazines and tobacco advertising.

MINORITIES AND TOBACCO

Rev. Jesse Brown, vice president, The Onyx Group, P.O. Box 60, 17 Cynwyd Rd., Bala Cynwyd, Pa. 19004 ♦ (610) 617-9971, fax (610) 617-9972. Activism in the African-American community. Also: **Charyn Sutton**, president. Marketing to African-Americans, smoking cessation.

Jane Delgado, National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services (COSSMHO), 1501 16th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 797-4327, fax (202) 797-4353. Latinos and tobacco.

Rev. Samuel J. Jones, national co-chairman, National Multi-Cultural Task Force, 1451 N. 51st St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53208 ♦ (414) 774-8645, fax (414) 445-8923. Forming a network to work with Hispanics, African-Americans, Asians, and Native Americans on strategies to deal with industry targeting of minorities. Also working on health and policy issues.

Mandrake, 150 W. Wellington Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60657 ♦ (312) 472-8648. Getting rid of tobacco billboards in minority communities.

Larry Murillo, health educator, Indian Health Service, 1825 Bell St., Sacramento, Calif. 95825 ♦ (916) 978-4202, fax (916) 978-4989. Native Americans and tobacco.

Louise Leung, project coordinator, Chinese Community Smokefree

Project, 1603 Liberty St., El Cerrito, Calif. 94530 ♦ tel. & fax (510) 215-1215. Asians and tobacco.

Marilyn Aguirre-Molina, senior program officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, College Road East, P.O. Box 2316, Princeton, N.J. 08543 ♦ (609) 951-5770, fax (609) 987-8746. Latinos and tobacco.

Robert Robinson, associate director, office on smoking and health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 4770 Buford Highway NE, K-50, Atlanta, Ga. 30341 ♦ (404) 488-5701, fax (404) 488-5767. African-Americans and tobacco, epidemiology.

Dr. Reed Tuckson, president, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, 1621 E. 120 St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90059 ♦ (213) 563-4987, fax (213) 563-5987. African-Americans and tobacco.

NICOTINE ADDICTION

Dr. Neal Benowitz, professor of medicine, University of California, Building 30, Room 3220, San Francisco General Hospital, 1001 Potrero Ave., San Francisco, Calif. 94110 ♦ (415) 206-8324, fax (415) 206-8949. Leading expert on nicotine.

Cliff Douglas, Tobacco Control Law and Policy Consultancy, 12036 Sawmill Court, Silver Spring, Md. 20902 ♦ (301) 949-2606, or in suburban Chicago at (708) 328-6793. Federal and state regulation of nicotine and litigation issues.

Dorothy Hatsukami, associate professor of psychiatry, University of Minnesota, department of psychiatry, Box 392 UMHC, Minneapolis, Minn. 55455 ♦ (612) 625-5168, fax (612) 624-8935. Smokeless tobacco treatment and addiction.

Dr. Jack Henningfield (See FEDERAL AGENCIES — NIDA).

Dr. Richard D. Hurt, director, Nicotine Dependence Center, and Nicotine Research Center, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn. 55905 ♦ (507) 266-1933, fax (507) 226 7236. Dealing with nicotine addiction in the context of other addictions.

Dr. John Hughes, professor of psychiatry, University of Vermont, department of psychiatry, Ira Allen School, 38 Fletcher Place, Burlington, Vt. 05401 ♦ (802) 660-3065, fax (802) 660-3064. Nicotine withdrawal; drug therapies and patches to help people quit.

Lynn Kozlowski, professor and head of biobehavioral health, Penn State University, 210 Henderson E., University Park, Pa. 16802 ♦ (814) 863-7256, fax (814) 863-5725. Low-tar cigarettes.

QUITTING/TREATMENT

Dr. Michael Fiore, director, Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention, University of Wisconsin Medical School, 1300 University Ave., Room 7278, Madison, Wis. 53706 ♦ (608) 262-8673, fax (608) 265-3102. Quitting and prevention, patches.

Ellen Gritz, professor and chair, department of behavioral science, Box 243, University of Texas, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, 1515 Holcomb Blvd., Houston, Tex. 77030 ♦ (713) 792-0919, fax (713) 794-4730. Women and smoking cessation.

Edward Lichtenstein, research scientist, Oregon Research Institute, 1715 Franklin Blvd., Eugene, Ore. 97403 ♦ (503) 484-2123, fax (503) 484-1108. Smoking cessation clinics and the role of doctors in helping people quit.

Dr. Mark Manley, chief, public health applications research branch, National Cancer Institute EPN-233, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Md. 20892 ♦ (301) 496-8584, fax (301) 496-8675. The role of doctors in helping people quit.

Judith Ockene, director, department of preventive and behavioral medicine, University of Massachusetts Medical Center, 55 Lake Ave. N., Worcester, Mass. 01655 ♦ (508) 856-2316, fax (508) 856-3840.

James Prochaska, director and professor, cancer prevention research center, University of Rhode Island, Flagg Rd., Kingston, R.I.

02881 ♦ (401) 792-2830, fax (401) 792-5562. "Stages" people go through when trying to quit.

Harry Lando, professor, division of epidemiology, University of Minnesota, 1300 S. 2nd St., Suite 300, Minneapolis, Minn. 55454 ♦ (612) 624-1877, fax (612) 624-0315. Treating those having a lot of trouble quitting.

Saul Shiffman, professor of psychology, smoking research group, University of Pittsburgh, 4015 O'Hara St., Room 604 OEH, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15260 ♦ (412) 624-8827, fax (412) 624-0377. Why people relapse.

TOBACCO INDUSTRY PHILANTHROPY

Dr. Alan Blum (See KEY PLAYERS) Arts and sports sponsorship.

Charyn Sutton (See MINORITIES AND TOBACCO) Giving to African-American organizations.

Dr. Reed Tuckson (See MINORITIES AND TOBACCO) Giving to African-American arts and causes.

RETAIL/WHOLESALE SALES GROUPS

National Association of Convenience Stores, 1605 King St., Alexandria, Va. 22314 ♦ (703) 684-3600, fax (703) 836-4564. Lindsay Hutter, vice president, industry relations.

American Wholesale Marketers Association, 1128 16th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 463-2124, fax (202) 467-0559. Jackie Cohen, vice president, member and public affairs.

EXPERTS ON SECOND-HAND SMOKE

Steven Bayard and James Repace (See FEDERAL AGENCIES — EPA).

Stanton Glantz (see KEY PLAYERS).

WOMEN AND TOBACCO

Dr. Michele Bloch, American Medical Women's Association, 14405 Briarwood Terrace, Rockville, Md. 20853 ♦ tel./fax (301) 460-4185. National policy.

Virginia Ernster, professor of epidemiology, department of epidemiology and biostatistics, School of Medicine, University of California, Box 0560, San Francisco, Calif. 94143 ♦ (415) 476-1424, fax (415) 476-6014. Smoking-related cancers and advertising.

Mildred Morse, director, National Smoking Cessation Campaign for African-American Women, 510 Wolf Drive, Silver Spring, Md. 20904 ♦ (301) 989-0848, fax (301) 384-4678. Women of color.

Regina Penna (See EXPERTS ON MEDIA CONFLICTS).

YOUTH AND TOBACCO

David Altman, associate professor, Bowman Grey School of Medicine, department of public health sciences, Medical Center Blvd., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27157 ♦ (910) 716-9556, fax (910) 716-7554. Youth access to tobacco, tobacco promotions.

Dr. Joseph DiFranza, University of Massachusetts Medical School, 47 Ashby State Rd., Fitchburg, Mass. 01420 ♦ (508) 343-6831, fax (508) 345-0786.

David Dubner, chairman, Student Coalition Against Tobacco (SCAT), P.O. Box 5995, Washington, D.C. 20016 ♦ (202) 828-3093, fax (202) 885-8240. Organizing tobacco control chapters around the country in high schools.

Dr. Robert Jaffe, executive director, Washington DOC, P.O. Box 20065, Seattle, Wash. 98102 ♦ (206) 287-2362, fax (206) 287-4287. Tobacco use by the young; advertising and marketing.

Rick Kropp, executive director, North Bay Health Resources Center, 55 Maria Drive, Suite 837, Petaluma, Calif. 94954 ♦ (707) 762-4591, fax (707) 762-5814. Youth access and ordinances, educating

merchants, and youth promotions and advertising.

Dr. John Pierce (See ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS).

INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS

Karen Lewis, manager, tobacco policy and research, The Advocacy Institute, 1730 Rhode Island Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 659-8475, fax (202) 659-8484. Lewis can lead reporters to tobacco control sources around the world.

Western Europe, especially France: **Philippe Boucher**, executive director, National Committee Against Tobacco, 66 Rue des Binelles, BP 13, 92310 Sevres, France ♦ (33-1) 46-23-1515, fax (33-1) 46-23-1840.

Australia and the Third World: **Simon Chapman**, department of community medicine, University of Sidney, Westmead Hospital, Westmead NSW 2145, Australia ♦ (61-2) 633-6675, fax (61-2) 689-1049.

Eastern Europe: **Gregory Connolly** (See KEY PLAYERS).

Alan Lopez, World Health Organization, tobacco or health program, 20 Avenue Appia, CH-1211 Geneva, Switzerland ♦ (41-22) 791-2111, fax (41-22) 791-0746. Tobacco deaths worldwide.

Asia, especially China: **Judith Mackay**, director, Asian Consultancy on Tobacco Control, Riftwood, 9th Milestone, DD 229, Lot 147, Clearwater Bay Rd., Sai Kung, Kowloon, Hong Kong ♦ tel. & fax (8-52) 719-5741.

Canada: **Garfield Mahood**, executive director, Nonsmokers Rights Association, 344 Bloor St. W., Suite 308, Toronto, Ontario M5S 3A7, Canada ♦ (416) 928-2900, fax (416) 928-1860.

Deborah McLellan, American Public Health Association, 1015 Fifteenth St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20005 ♦ (202) 789-5689, fax (202) 789-5661. International women's issues.

Richard Peto, professor of medical statistics and epidemiology, cancer fund studies unit, Nuffield department of clinical medicine, Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford OX2 6HE, United Kingdom ♦ (44-86) 5-57241, fax (44-86) 5-58817.

A world leader in the science of meta-analysis, Peto does huge studies and analyses on the effects and death rates worldwide from smoking. Peto can provide the number of tobacco deaths in any industrialized country in any year since 1950. His book, *Mortality from Smoking in Developed Countries 1950-2000* (Oxford University Press), includes all this data.

Western Europe: **Luk Joossens**, director, European Bureau for Action on Smoking Prevention, 117 rue des Atrebat, 1140 Brussels, Belgium ♦ (32-2) 732-2468, fax (32-2) 732-9192.

Latin America: **Luis Pinillos**, Commission Against Tobacco, Av. Angamos Este 2520, Surquillo, Lima, Peru ♦ (51-14) 475-821, fax (51-14) 484-548.

Japan: **Rikiei Shibasaki**, Tobaccoless Osaka, 2-25-3-401 Nakamiya, Ashai-ku, Osaka 535, Japan ♦ (81-6) 956-5607, fax (81-6) 956-5792.

Third World: **David Simpson**, executive director, International Agency on Tobacco and Health, 109 Gloucester Place, London, England W1H 3PH, United Kingdom ♦ (44-71) 935-3519, fax (44-71) 935-3463.

Canada: **David Swenor** (See ECONOMICS, TOBACCO TAXES, AND TRADE ISSUES) The Canadian tobacco control experience and taxes.

Africa, especially South Africa: **Derek Yach**, Medical Research Council, community health research group, Private Bag X385, Pretoria 0001, Republic of South Africa ♦ (27-12) 324-1680, fax (27-12) 324-1695.

Eastern Europe, especially Poland: **Dr. Witold Zatonski**, director, department of cancer control and epidemiology, The M. Sklodowska-Curie Memorial Cancer Center and Institute of

Oncology, 101 Findera St., 02-781 Warsaw, Poland ♦ tel./fax (48-2) 643-92-34.

REPORTERS

The reporters included here have done exceptional work on tobacco issues and have agreed to be accessible and helpful to other journalists. Daily journalists are generally less busy in the morning. Database searches under these names will bring up important work.

Walt Bogdanish, ABC News — *Day One*, 147 Columbus Ave., New York, N.Y. 10023 ♦ (212) 456-1431, fax (212) 456-1011.

Justin Catanoso, *News & Record*, 200 E. Market St., P.O. Box 20848, Greensboro, N.C. 27420 ♦ (910) 373-7352, fax (910) 373-7382.

Alix Freedman and **Eben Shapiro**, *The Wall Street Journal*, 200 Liberty St., New York, N.Y. 10281 ♦ Shapiro, (212) 416-2305; Freedman, (212) 416-3331, fax (212) 416-2653.

Doug Levy, *USA Today*, 1000 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22229 ♦ (703) 276-4573.

Richard Harris, National Public Radio, 635 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001 ♦ (202) 414-2786, fax (202) 414-3038.

Philip Hiltz, *The New York Times*, 1627 I St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20006 ♦ (202) 862-0376, fax (202) 862-0340.

Myren Levin, *Los Angeles Times*, 20,000 Prairie St., Chatsworth, Calif. 91311 ♦ (818) 772-3373, fax (818) 772-3385.

Morton Mintz, free-lancer (former *Washington Post* reporter), 4521 Dorset Ave., Chevy Chase, Md. 20815 ♦ tel./fax (301) 654-2759

Paul Raeburn, Associated Press, 20 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10020 ♦ (212) 621-1659, fax (212) 621-7520.

John Schwartz, *The Washington Post*, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071 ♦ (202) 334-5043, fax (202) 334-6192.

Andrew Skolnick, associate news editor, *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, 515 N. State St., Chicago, Ill. 60610 ♦ (312) 464-2448, fax (312) 464-5824.

JOURNALS

Ad Week, P.O. Box 1973, Danbury, Conn. 06813 ♦ (203) 792-4700, fax (203) 792-5822.

Advertising Age, 965 E. Jefferson St., Detroit, Mich. 48207 ♦ (313) 446-0450, fax (313) 446-6777. Research department in Chicago: (312) 649-5476.

American Journal of Public Health, American Public Health Association, 1015 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20005 ♦ (202) 789-5677, (202) 789-5661. Articles and studies on tobacco and public health in almost every issue.

Brand Week, P.O. Box 1974, Danbury, Conn. 06813 ♦ (203) 792-4700, fax (203) 792-5822.

The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), American Medical Association, 515 N. State St., Chicago, Ill. 60610 ♦ (312) 464-5839, fax (312) 464-5374.

Legal Times, 1730 M St. NW, Suite 802, Washington, D.C. 20036 ♦ (202) 457-0686, fax (202) 457-0718. Tobacco lawsuits, litigation, PACs and lobbying efforts.

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), CDC office of public affairs, Mail Stop D-25, 1600 Clifton Rd., Atlanta, Ga. 30333 ♦ (404) 639-3286, fax (404) 639-1623. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's weekly listings of death and diseases often have epidemiological studies on smoking among the overall population, as well as breakdowns by race, age, income bracket, etc.

The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), 1440 Main St., Waltham, Mass. 02254 ♦ (617) 893-3800, fax (617) 893-0413.

Smoking and Tobacco Control Monographs, office of cancer com-

munication, Building 31, room 10A29, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Md. 20892 ♦ (301) 496-6631. Recommendations for tobacco control workers on issues including smokeless tobacco, the role of clinicians, developing local ordinances.

Surgeon General's Reports, office on smoking and health, CDC MS-K50, 4770 Buford Highway, NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30341 ♦ (404) 488-5705, fax (404) 488-5939. Tackles a different tobacco topic every year — addiction (1988), young people (1994), and cessation (1990). The 1989 report is a twenty-five-year overview.

Tobacco Control, P.O. Box 408, Franklin, Mass. 02038 ♦ (800) 236-6265, fax (800) 232-9265. A peer-reviewed quarterly of the British Medical Association on tobacco and smoking worldwide.

Tobacco International, 130 W. 42nd St., Suite 2200, New York, N.Y. 10036 ♦ (212) 391-2060, fax (212) 827-0945. Trade journal that offers industry perspective.

Tobacco Reporter, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, N.C. 27604 ♦ (919) 872-5040, fax (919) 876-6531. Trade journal.

Tobacco: Situation and Outlook from the Economic Research Service, USDA (See FEDERAL AGENCIES — U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE).

Tobacco: World Markets and Trade from the Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA (See FEDERAL AGENCIES — U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE).

World Smoking and Health, 1599 Clifton Rd. NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30329 ♦ (404) 329-7595, fax (404) 244-1699. The American Cancer Society's quarterly on the issue.

BOOKS

Barbarians at the Gate: The Fall of RJR Nabisco by Bruce Burroughs and John Helyar, New York, HarperCollins, 1991.

Cigarettes are Sublime by Richard Klein, Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1993. An ode to the joys and wonders of smoking.

The Cigarette Underworld, Alan Blum, editor, Secaucus, N.J., Lyle Stuart Inc., 1985. A collection of articles about smoking, mostly by doctors, originally published in a special edition of the New York State Journal of Medicine. Available from Alan Blum (See KEY PLAYERS).

Great Expectations by Simon Chapman, London, Comedia, 1986. International advertising and the tobacco industry.

The Ladykillers: Why Smoking is a Feminist Issue by Bobbie Jacobson, New York, Continuum Press, 1982.

Beating the Ladykillers: Women and Smoking by Bobbie Jacobson, London, Pluto Press, 1986.

Merchants of Death: The American Tobacco Industry by Larry C. White, New York, Beech Tree Books, 1988.

Nicotine Addiction, C. Tracy Orleans and John Slade, editors, New York, Oxford University Press, 1993.

The Serpent on the Staff: The Unhealthy Politics of the American Medical Association by Howard Wolinsky and Tom Brune, New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1994. Includes a chapter on the AMA and tobacco politics.

The Smoke Ring: Tobacco, Money and Multinational Politics by Peter Taylor, New York, Pantheon Books, 1984.

Smoking and Politics: Policy Making and the Federal Bureaucracy, fourth edition, by A. Lee Fritschler, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1989.

Thank You For Smoking, a novel by Christopher Buckley, New York, Random House, 1994. The comic misadventures of a tobacco industry lobbyist.

Tobacco Control in the Third World: A Resource Atlas by Simon Chapman with Wong Wai Leng, Malaysia, International Organization of Consumers Unions, 1990. Profiles of 96 countries including tobacco use prevalence, state of the industry, tobacco controls, taxes, and trade issues in each location.

So What?

Pulitzer Prize-winning
exposés and their sometimes
dubious consequences

By Bruce Porter

Eileen Welsome, a reporter for *The Albuquerque Tribune*, stumbled on the case while leafing through a declassified report about radiation experiments done on animals in conjunction with the Manhattan Project toward the end of World War II. In an obscure footnote at the bottom of one page, she found a reference to the fact that animals weren't the only research subjects. Without their knowledge, eighteen people had also been injected with doses of plutonium so scientists could study the effects of radiation on the human body. "I was just stunned," recalls Welsome, who at the time covered neighborhood news. "All my intuition told me I had just found the best story of my life."

It took her a year and a half to pull it all together, in a three-day series that ran

in November 1993. And the response was all a crusading reporter could hope for. A month after the stories appeared the secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy called a press conference in Washington and admitted for the first time that the government had used people as nuclear guinea pigs. President Bill Clinton himself followed up by creating a presidential advisory committee with a thirty-five-person staff and \$5 million budget to document the cases. Dozens of newspapers and the TV networks jumped on the story, turning up further radiation experiments in Nashville, in Cincinnati, and in Boston, where they found that one school had persuaded children to join a "science club" and have fun spooning down radiated breakfast cereal. Congress weighed in with seven committee hearings, three in the Senate and four in the House. And as hundreds of citizens read about the outrage that had been visited on members of their families, a blizzard of lawsuits rained down on government agencies.

The stories won Welsome, forty-three, a journalism graduate of the

University of Texas, not only the 1994 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting but also a six-figure advance from Delacorte Press, whereupon she quit the paper and set out to tell it all in a book. "Now," she says, "I've got the wonderful opportunity to travel all over the country and follow up my own story."

Welsome's radiation series stands as dramatic evidence that, however ragged the reputation of the media these days, investigative journalism can still make a powerful difference in people's lives — can still alter history and bring about change. But how often is there such clear cause and effect? Did the reaction to Welsome's stories stand as the exception to the rule or the rule itself? To find out, *CJR* took a look at several dozen Pulitzer-winning investigations over the past decade — specifically focusing on ones that had rooted out corruption, exposed waste and incompetence, laid bare transgressions of justice — and sought to find out whether, beyond the glory falling to the paper and the reporter, the stories had done any actual good.

*Bruce Porter, a *CJR* contributing editor, is director of journalism at Brooklyn College and an adjunct professor at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism.*

The answers varied from Yes to No to Sort Of. Among the more successful were those stories that surprised public officials in the act of outrageously abusing the powers of their office, which was what Lucy Morgan discovered when she followed up on complaints about the Pasco County sheriff's office back in 1983 for the *St. Petersburg Times* in Florida.

Looking into allegations of corruption and incompetence, she found one deputy who had been fired from a law enforcement job in a neighboring county and had secured his position in Pasco by the simple expedient of buying the sheriff a house. He had also, it turned out, bought his own patrol car as well as his uniform and his gun, and once on the force he conducted himself like a one-man department, patrolling whenever he chose and harassing people he didn't like.

Morgan also discovered that more than two dozen of the 195 deputies on the force had arrest records, some for felony-level crimes. "They'd even hired people who'd been arrested by their own department," says Morgan, fifty-four, who had been a *Times* reporter for twenty-six years. "I found that one had a suspended driver's license, and here he was driving around in a green and white deputy's cruiser."

A harassment campaign ensued. The sheriff's cronies passed out bumper stickers that displayed the drawing of a screw followed by the words "Lucy Morgan." Morgan's grandson was threatened by a mysterious visitor to her daughter-in-law's office. Men were also sent over to Morgan's house to spy on her at night. "I had the only 'prowlers' in the neighborhood who were going through the bushes carrying walkie-talkies," she says.

Morgan stayed on the story until the state's attorney finally brought an indictment against the sheriff on grounds of official misconduct and other charges. The sheriff managed to beat the case, but Morgan's stories

seemed proof enough to voters that a change was due, and in that fall's primary they threw him out of office.

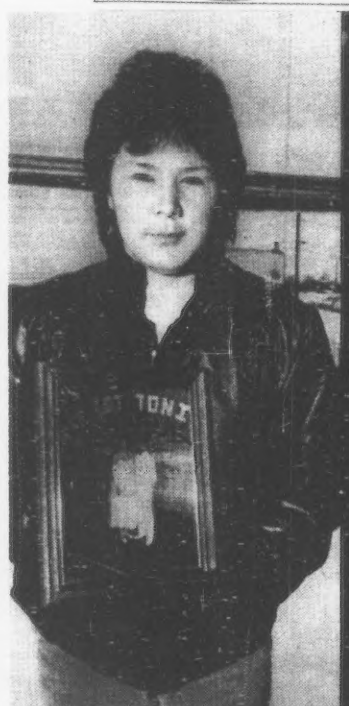
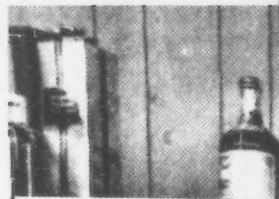
In its submission for a Pulitzer, the paper could report that the sheriff had cleaned house to the extent of firing a dozen deputies, including the do-it-yourselfer, tightening up on background checks, and instituting modern management practices. The Florida Sheriffs' Association distributed Morgan's stories to all its members as an example of how not to run a department, and it asked Morgan to speak at the sheriffs' convention that year, an invitation she respectfully declined. "I told them it wasn't in my interest," Morgan says. "I get better stories when the sheriffs get into trouble."

Ninety babies were surviving each year who would most likely not have made it in 1987

The investigations that have the most lasting effects, of course, are those that end up actually saving lives. When *The Alabama Journal* in Montgomery began looking into the state's abysmal infant mortality record in 1987, Alabama recorded 13 deaths per 1,000, the most of any state in the union. In response to the paper's twenty-story series, which put a human face on a problem that had been hazed over by statistics, the state Medicaid agency not only quadrupled the money allotted for prenatal programs, but also brought more poor women under the health care umbrella — with dramatic results. By 1994 Alabama had risen four places on the state list and its death rate had fallen by 20 percent, to 10.3. This meant that 90 babies were now surviving each year who would most likely not have made it in 1987.

But readers have been known to lynch the messenger rather than accept disturbing news, even where their own

In the winners' circle, clockwise from top: Suicide and alcoholism in Alaska, infant mortality out of control in Alabama, an *Inquirer* investigation into innocence, the exposé that shook the Department of Agriculture, and the government's nuclear guinea pigs.





Liquor is available at the Kake Community Liquor Store, which is operated by the town.



School nurse may have made the difference for young mom

The Plutonium Experiment

PART I



*Evidence of innocence:
Doubt cast on a murder case*



DEADLY MEAT

Poor inspection exposes public to health risks



well-being is concerned. In 1989 the *Washington Daily News*, in tiny Washington, North Carolina, a lumber and fertilizer-manufacturing town about a hundred miles east of Raleigh, found out that the town water supply, a stream called Tranter's Creek, contained thirteen times the amount of a chemical carcinogen than was considered safe by state and federal agencies. What's more, it discovered, local officials had known about the condition for eight years, and done nothing to warn the populace.

One of those doing the digging was Betty Gray, who had been on the paper only three months. Then thirty-six, Gray had wanted to be a journalist ever since graduating from high school but got sidetracked for twelve years running her father's insurance office. "I figured when I joined the paper it was now or never," she says.

When she broke the story, town officials vehemently denied that the water was really that unsafe and accused the paper of blowing the problem out of proportion. At first, readers seemed to agree. "People did not speak to me or to my parents," says Gray.

The local television station, WITN, gave town officials plenty of air time to pooh-pooh the stories. On one newscast reporter Linda Shore (who later became the station's anchor) told viewers she had also heard these "rumors" about the water supply, then went on to introduce the city manager who she said would assure everyone that nothing was really wrong. "We do not have a problem here," he said, and proceeded to gulp down a large tumbler of the substance in question.

The very next day toxicologists from the state's Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources issued a stern warning to residents of Washington: Don't drink the water. Don't wash dishes in it. "They even said if you must shower in it or take a bath, don't breathe the fumes," recalls Gray. The following day the U.S. Marines arrived in town with a trailer-truck load of fresh water, and locals found themselves lining up with buckets and cans, like refugees in a disaster area.

From then on the winds of public

sentiment shifted dramatically. Less than a month after the stories began running, the mayor and members of his city council were voted out of office in a landslide defeat. The state board of health changed the law that had exempted small towns like Washington from having to live up to water-quality standards. A year and a half later the town approved a \$12.2 million bond issue for construction of a water treatment plant. And for the way its newly elected public officials had faced up to the problem, Washington won an All-American City Award for 1993.

Reporter Gray? After her paper got the Pulitzer, she found herself traveling around the country addressing press panels, even being invited to Washington to advise Eastern European journalists how to report on environmental degradation. She also went up a rung in her journalistic career, quitting the *Daily News* to join *The Virginian-Pilot*, for whom she now covers the state legislature.

Where stories deal with social rather than health problems, the effect is often dramatically less dramatic. In the last decade both the *Akron Beacon Journal* and *The Boston Globe* won Pulitzers for delving into the severe racial polarity in their respective communities; but no one was surprised when blacks and whites who read the series didn't immediately start greeting each other with high-fives as they passed on the street. Even when the social problems produce lethal consequences, it still seems hard for journalists to initiate anything that looks like real change. In 1988 the *Anchorage Daily News* published a mammoth series about alcoholism among Eskimos, Aleuts, and other Indian groups. Titled "A People in Peril," the series ran for ten straight days, combined the efforts of sixty-four writers and editors, and revealed that native Alaskans, most of whom live in the bush, were nearly four times more likely to commit suicide than people in the rest of the country. Among males twenty to twenty-four years old, the paper reported, 257 per 100,000 committed suicide as opposed to 25.6 in the general population. And this was not counting the far greater number of

"accidental" deaths related to alcohol, such as freezing in the snow within sight of your cabin or tumbling off a fishing boat in the Bering Sea.

The series caused quite a stir, when it came to letters to the editor and orders for reprints. And there were a few tangible "reforms." The telephone company, for instance, closed down a money order office in one bush community, which had served primarily for ordering in crates of liquor from Anchorage. The state legislature made bootlegging a felony. It also gave native villages more control over saloons and liquor stores, as well as more latitude when it came to voting themselves dry, or, for that matter, "damp," a designation meaning it's legal to get as drunk as you want your self but you can't sell booze to anyone else. There was also a predictable increase in state funds for things like anti-alcohol and suicide prevention programs.

But the impact on the statistics was disappointing, admits Howard Weaver, editor of the paper. Now, seven years after the series ran, "the suicide and alcoholism rate is not significantly better than it was when we did the stories," he says. Nevertheless, Weaver argues that the pieces were written to influence people's attitudes, which had been to sweep the problem under the rug. "The Alaskan natives are involved in denial," he says. "The big service we provided was to make it legitimate to talk about it."

Of all the possible press targets, probably the most resistant to change by journalism is any law that serves the interests of powerful professional and business associations, such as the medical and legal fraternities and the insurance and banking industries. This is particularly true at the state level, where members of legislatures, for all their speechifying at election time, usually attend much more closely to the needs of special-interest groups than to the wishes of the general public.

In 1991 *The Indianapolis Star* won a Pulitzer for a series on medical malpractice, which found not only that many doctors adjudged guilty of egregiously unprofessional conduct faced no consequences for their failings, but also, because of a legislative cap on

malpractice awards, that the patients involved often received pitifully inadequate compensation for their injuries, and then waited years to collect. In addition, patients suing physicians had to run their cases by a panel of doctors before bringing them into court. "The intent of the law was to reduce frivolous lawsuits," says reporter Susan Headden, who worked on the series with a colleague, Joseph Hallinan. "What we found was it didn't reduce frivolous suits but it ended up closing the door of the courts to those people who really deserved a hearing."

This was not the story Hallinan was looking for when he began randomly going through state files for the names of prison doctors. He wanted to write about the poor state of corrections medicine and was checking the complaint files at the Indiana Department of Insurance on the theory that such a low-status medical job would attract only doctors with a bad malpractice record. "He was going over there every day," says Headden, now a reporter for *U.S. News & World Report*. "Finally, one of the clerks came up to him and said, 'Joe, if you really want to do a good story, it's not about the prison doctors, it's about the ones on the outside, practicing on your mother and mine.'"

Since neither the state nor the hospitals nor the Indiana medical licensing board tracks doctors with high malpractice losses, the newspaper had to compile its own database, entering every successful malpractice suit involving damages of more than \$100,000. What it found was a hard core of doctors with three or more malpractice losses, nearly all of them still practicing medicine, none having suffered the loss of any hospital privileges and none receiving any sanction by the state licensing board, or even much of an increase in their malpractice insurance.

"One patient we found had a cast left on too long, so gangrene developed and two of his toes had to be removed," says Headden, who spent nine months with Hallinan going

through more than 600 malpractice cases. "A woman who had breast enhancement surgery ended up with a double mastectomy because gangrene developed through a faulty procedure. A kid was born severely deformed in every way and mentally retarded because of mistakes made by the obstetrician. Yet in every instance the

as usual, the two others believed to have simply grown old and retired. On the patient side, winners of lawsuits were still waiting an average of thirty-two months to collect their first dime. Neither did anything happen at the state level to ensure that incompetent doctors were disciplined or to increase the \$750,000 cap on malpractice awards, even in horrendous cases.

And the national mood had changed; there was less sympathy for consumer complaints. In fact,

the Indiana principle of putting a money cap on successful lawsuits has not only won the predictable approval of the American Medical Association but has also been touted by Indiana Representative David McIntosh, formerly

a fellow of the conservative Indianapolis-based Hudson Institute, who, as one of Speaker Gingrich's army of Republican freshmen, is sure to have a large influence over future health-care legislation.

Another reason the *Star* series failed to have an effect was the absence of a crucial second wave of pressure from some public interest group to lobby the legislature on behalf of patients. Indeed, where powerful business interests are concerned a journalist usually has to point out some flagrant violation of the law in order to achieve any significant change. In his 1989 Pulitzer Prize series on redlining for *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, reporter Bill Dedman was able, through extensive database reporting and help from university researchers, to show that banks were routinely discriminating against middle-class black applicants for housing loans. This was in violation of the federal Community Reinvestment Acts of 1977 and 1978, which said that lending institutions must meet the needs of all members of the community.

The series hit the banking industry like the proverbial bombshell. This

Sheriff Short made list of secret targets



St. Petersburg Times.
Pulitzer Prize, 1983

The sheriff's cronies passed out bumper stickers that displayed a drawing of a screw followed by reporter Lucy Morgan's name

doctors came away from these experiences professionally unscathed."

Beyond a flurry of discussion on local talk shows, and some eight hundred calls that Indiana residents placed to state agencies inquiring about their own doctors, the impact of the three-day series proved negligible. Last fall, when the paper began a five-year-after follow-up, it found that three of the five worst doctors were still doing business

was in Atlanta, after all, where the mayor as well as a lot of city administrators were black, and decisions about who got the city's considerable banking business were not likely to be divorced from the banks' treatment of African-Americans.

The banks set up a \$72 million fund to enable Atlantans with modest incomes to gain access to mortgages. (As the paper pointed out, this was only a fraction of the millions that banks had *not* lent to blacks over all the years of redlining.) Beyond that, the banks increased in various ways their receptivity to black loan applicants to the extent that over the next five years the turn-down rate was cut nearly in half. "What we have in bank lending is a marked improvement over what we had in 1989," says Craig Taylor, executive director of the Cooperative Resource Center in Atlanta, which helps develop nonprofit housing. "I don't think ever again are they going to be caught in a public relations disaster as they were then."

The series also resulted in a change at the national level. Lending institutions used to be allowed to report data on loans that were approved or turned down in a way that made it difficult to see whether they were merely being financially prudent or discriminating on grounds of the applicant's race or the color of a neighborhood. After the *Constitution* stories, the requirements were modified so federal bank examiners and journalists alike could see more clearly if the banks were skirting the law. Data must now be disclosed on the racial makeup of those turned down for loans as well as those accepted. "I think the real importance of the stories was to allow us to get a lot more information than we could before," says Dedman, currently working at the AP in New York City. "Now it's easier for journalists all around the country to do what we did."

While the Atlanta exposé achieved its intended goal, in other instances investigations have swerved in unpredictable directions. Witness the Willie Horton stories that won a Pulitzer in 1988 for the *Eagle-Tribune*, a family-owned paper in Lawrence, Massachusetts. What started as an inquiry into policy

decisions of the state Department of Corrections ended up as a series of pieces that fostered the worst sort of racial stereotyping and led readers in a journalistic version of a lynching. The stories also furnished George Bush his most powerful club against his Democratic opponent, Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis.

In what is by now a familiar story, Willie Horton, a black man, had been convicted with two other men in the



Lawrence, Massachusetts,
Eagle Tribune. Pulitzer Prize, 1988

Reporter
Susan Forrest
says today
that she
is ashamed
of what
she did

1974 stabbing death of a white Lawrence man and had served nearly twelve years in prison before being placed into a weekend furlough program, from which he walked away in mid-1986. When he was captured ten

months later, in the spring of 1987, after having raped a Maryland woman and brutalized her fiancé, the *Lawrence Eagle-Tribune* fell on the case like a hound on a rabbit track, producing some 175 stories over the next year. Many of them, according to an extensive analysis of the series published in 1989 in the *Washington Journalism Review*, were woefully lopsided and filled with slipshod reporting and outrageous errors. In campaigning successfully to have the furlough law rescinded by the state legislature, for instance, the *Tribune* ran eighteen boosterish stories about an ad-hoc anti-furlough group called Citizens Against an Unsafe Society, giving times and places for meetings, and whom to contact. Meanwhile, it wrote practically nothing about the history or record of the furlough program itself. While editorializing in shrill tones against Dukakis — "throughout this whole mess Mr. Dukakis has paid no attention whatsoever to the human pain and suffering the case caused. No attention! None! None whatsoever!" — the paper never mentioned that furlough programs had been created in 1972 under a Republican governor, Francis Sargent, or that first-degree murderers were ruled eligible for it by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in 1973, or that the program had widespread support, from the American Correctional Association and the American Civil Liberties Union alike. The paper also ignored a 1987 report by the Massachusetts Department of Corrections that said inmates who had taken part experienced "lower rates of recidivism" than those not furloughed before to release.

Lopsided as was its coverage, worse still was the paper's general disregard for accuracy and the manner in which it perpetuated errors that heightened the racially tinged hysteria surrounding the case. The most flagrant of these had to do with the original Lawrence murder case in 1974. Repeatedly in its news stories, for instance, the paper kept insisting that Horton had committed the stabbing, when during the trial it was never established which of the three men convicted for the crime had actually done the deed. Moreover, it

repeated on five different occasions in front page stories that, according to a local legislator named Joseph Hermann, since dead, who at the time was co-sponsor of an anti-furlough bill, "Horton cut off the youth's genitals, put them in his mouth and then spit them out." Hermann was quoted as saying this information "came out in the trial." In fact, no such thing came out in the trial, because no mutilation had ever occurred. The *Tribune* had just never bothered to check actual court records.

When the paper submitted its packet of stories for a Pulitzer, it was careful to leave out the ones mentioning the genitals, as well as its more histrionic opinion pieces; and the jury of journalists ended up being impressed more by the fact the paper's campaign changed the state furlough law than by how. "You look for results," said Allan M. Siegal, assistant managing editor of *The New York Times*, who headed the general news jury at the time.

Susan Forrest, the reporter responsible for the paper's most emotion-laden coverage, says today that she is "ashamed" of what she did. Now a police reporter for *New York Newsday*, Forrest had worked only at a Massachusetts weekly before going to the *Tribune*. "My experience was zip, there was not a lot of editing, and no one ever said to me in hindsight, 'Maybe we should check the court records.' It was my first experience with politicians and these guys manipulated me. . . . I'm ashamed of that — if you want to put that I'm ashamed, that's fine — and I'd never do it again. . . . And I gotta tell you, when the Pulitzer was announced I was floored. There was a party and I didn't even go. Deep down I never felt I deserved it."

Journalists, it would seem, get more mileage out of feeding the public's fear of crime than uncovering a miscarriage of justice. In 1987 the prize, one of three the paper won that year, went to John Woestendiek, the prison beat reporter for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, for his effort in trying to gain a new trial for a convicted murderer named Terry McCracken. Four years earlier, McCracken, then nineteen, had been found guilty of killing a seventy-one-

year-old man during a hold-up at a delicatessen in suburban Collingdale in Delaware County. After spending six months checking McCracken's claim of innocence, Woestendiek reported that he had come up with several witnesses who bolstered McCracken's alibi that he was home at the time; he also located the California scientist who had invented the gun residue tests the prosecutor used at the trial to show that McCracken had recently fired a pistol. The newspaper paid the scientist to review the results, and he concluded that they had been interpreted erroneously.

Now, nine years and hundreds of column-inches after the original *Inquirer* stories, McCracken's case is still unresolved. Twice, his lawyer, John McDougall, was granted motions for a new trial. Twice these motions were appealed by the prosecutor, and twice they were reversed by higher courts. The last turn-down is currently on appeal to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, whose decision is expected soon. If it's favorable, then McCracken will still have to go through another trial. If not, he faces having to serve a life sentence in prison.

Nevertheless, since 1987, when the judge who granted his first new trial also released him on bail, McCracken has at least been out of prison, a state of affairs from which Woestendiek draws some degree of satisfaction. "I guess you feel frustrated when you write a story that you think should lead to something, and it doesn't," says Woestendiek, forty-one, who joined the *Inquirer* in 1981. "But I don't feel as bad as I would if Terry was still in jail."

But McCracken's attorney denies that Woestendiek played any part in setting McCracken free. "There was nothing new unearthed by his investigation," says McDougall, who has now had the case for twelve long years. "It appeared as though he had found all those witnesses and developed a story, but he was simply writing what we had already presented." He points out that in the most recent grant of a new trial in 1992, the judge based his decision not on any testimony by the people Woestendiek found to support

McCracken's alibi or on what the newspaper's gun expert had to say but on a recantation by the chief witness against McCracken, which the newspaper had nothing to do with.

Although the *Inquirer* was careful not to make any undue claims for helping to secure McCracken's release in its submission for a Pulitzer, other papers are clearly willing to stretch a point when describing the effects of their journalism. This tendency seems to emanate as much from the award criteria as from a newspaper's understandable desire to feel that it is making a difference. The impression stands out pretty clearly that the judges tend to look more favorably on stories that lead to specific results. This attitude, however, seems to overlook the fact that journalism can have as powerful an influence through some ripple effect down the line as from any immediate response. Mike McGraw, for instance, a reporter for *The Kansas City Star*, won a Pulitzer with Jeff Taylor in 1992 for their devastating exposé of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Among changes urged in the series that actually came to pass: the shutting down of more than 1,200 redundant agricultural extension offices and new labeling regulations that advise consumers on possible contaminants in food products.

But perhaps more important was the way in which the series educated and energized consumers working for reform, an effect that would be difficult to measure in concrete terms. "We only have knowledge of the problem because of the work done by Mike and Jeff," says Donna Rosenbaum, executive director of a Seattle activist group called Safe Tables Our Priority, or STOP. After the highly publicized deaths in 1993 of four children from eating government surplus beef tainted with E-coli bacteria, STOP, which is forming some fifteen or twenty chapters around the country, worked successfully to get the USDA at least to categorize the bacteria as an adulterant. "We make that series required reading for all our people," she says. "You read those stories and come away clearly focused on all the things you have to do." ♦

CAMILO JOSÉ VERGARA:



South Bronx, 1980



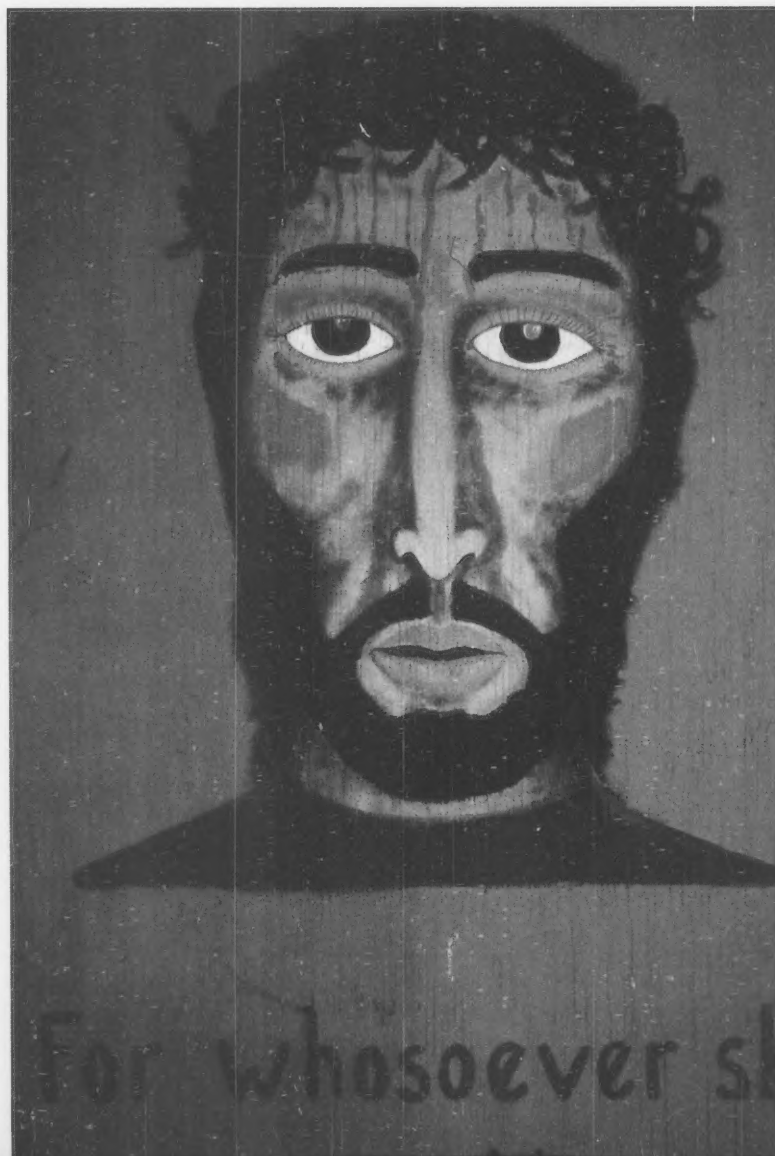
1983

A R C H I V I S T

*The words and pictures on these pages are the work of Camilo José Vergara, a different kind of photojournalist. A sociologist by training, the fifty-year-old Vergara describes himself as a "self-appointed documentarian of areas of urban poverty." He uses the structures and artifacts of those areas — rarely their inhabitants — to chronicle decline (and occasionally, tentative rebirth) as well as to record beauty in unlikely places. His book, *The New American Ghetto*, is to be published this fall by Rutgers University Press.*

In 1977 I began documenting ghettos, with the intention of creating a record of neighborhoods that were being discarded and destroyed at unprecedented speed.

Through my photos, I offer a visual journey through urban landscapes and interiors, accompanied by a narrative spun largely from my direct observation, accounts given by ghetto residents, and historical writings. I look at places: residential areas, vacant lots, institutions, factories, and always, their surroundings. In these communities, the walls have become surfaces on which to vent anger, to display





1988



1994

O F D E C L I N E



Contrast in Detroit: A suffering Jesus, 1994, and poolhall prostitutes, 1993

Edmonds Place
S. side of the street



East of John R.
Detroit 72

© C. Vergara

view S-W along
Clinton Ave. from



Badger Ave.
Newark 81

x

Garfield Ave.
by R. R. underpass.



Englewood
JAN 26 1992

East

The Ark, 14th Ave
and Bergen St.
Central Ward



Newark, N.J.
March 87

© C. Vergara

Clockwise from top left: A mansion in a wasteland — downtown Detroit, 1994; a screaming appeal against alcohol in Newark's Central Ward, 1995; storefront church Jesus, Apostles, and a saintly woman in Chicago, 1992; and Kea's Ark, built by the folk artist Kea Tawana from the shards of Newark and later razed on orders from city hall, 1987.

models worthy of emulation, to represent Afro-American and Latino culture and to memorialize the dead.

Photographs function as containers of information, fragments from which to reconstruct lost neighborhoods. I take successive photographs of the same places to track change over time: buildings being abandoned, then razed, and sometimes replaced by new structures. One can observe the transformation in context, because the rest of the neighborhood has also been documented. Some of my series consist of more than a dozen views taken during nearly two decades.

To be able to scan an area, and later to select blocks and buildings for documentation, I photograph from the roofs of buildings, elevated highways, elevated subway lines, and the streets. I try to saturate the surroundings to obtain views from different levels, resulting in an array of connected images I call pictorial networks. Using straight shots, slow color film, and perspective-corrective lenses, I also search for the conditions — evenly distributed light, for example — that best reveal physical forms.

My archive consists of more than 9,000 color slides covering the South Bronx, Harlem, central Brooklyn, Newark, Camden, the South Side and the West Side of Chicago, Gary, Detroit, and South Central Los Angeles.

The series showing the demise of an apartment building on 178th Street in the South Bronx, and its replacement by townhouses (pages 48-49), is a short version of the best known of all my photographic sequences. When I took the first photograph in 1980, the building seemed solid, large and full of life, but I suspected that it might not last long. The neighborhood had many burnt-out ruins, so it seemed plausible that this building was going to follow in the same direction. It did.

I call this emerging entropic world "the new American ghetto." Documenting it, I became a one-man Farm Security Administration — trying to show the decline of cities as FSA photographers documented rural poverty in the 1930s.

As I return to the neighborhoods, I

am quick to notice changes. The face of a hollering black youth under the words "Your mother didn't raise you to be a drunk" on a billboard along a desolate stretch of Clinton Avenue in the Central Ward of Newark is one recent example. I had seen this billboard (along with others attacking racism, child abuse, and other evils) in Chicago and the South Bronx, in environments that, more than most, would lead a person to get drunk. None of these signs are found in white neighborhoods, even though most racists, drunks, child abusers, and murderers live in white communities.

The problems with my approach were numerous. First, the sheer size of the undertaking, since every large American city has a ghetto and some, such as New York and Chicago, have several. The South Side of Chicago alone covers more than twenty square miles. This could be a project for hundreds of photographers.

Secondly, the pictures did not sell in the early years. Who would be interested in buying straight pictures of abandoned buildings, empty lots, graffiti, blocks badly in need of repairs, and anonymous housing projects? My historian friends would say to me, "your pictures will be invaluable in a hundred years." That was nice to hear, but it did not pay my bills.

Lastly, this is a dangerous undertaking. On several occasions I have had rocks and bottles thrown at me. In Detroit, I was shown a gun and told to leave; in Harlem I was punched.

Despite its drawbacks, I saw the documentation of the American ghetto as the opportunity of my life. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, many photographers were paid to photograph the phenomenal growth of cities. Today, there are very few photographers documenting their demise.

We tend to believe that truth resides in statistics, a fallacy called "the tyranny of numbers." But urban forms also speak eloquently to those who take time to observe and inquire about their meanings. I see my documentation as a means for us to comprehend the decline of our cities. ♦

Washington's

Is the time right for the *Times*?

by Allan Freedman

No, Barney Frank told a relatively new *Washington Times* reporter back in 1990, no he did not want to be interviewed. *The Washington Times*, the congressman added, was "an odious piece of shit."

Representative Frank, the Massachusetts Democrat, may have had special reasons for disliking the *Times*. In 1989 he had been the target of a *Times* exposé of his housemate's connection to a gay prostitution ring, a series that nearly wrecked his career. Still, liberal Democrats with less personal experience than Frank have also tended to be suspicious of the openly conservative newspaper. The powerful Democrats who have controlled the House for the last four decades, along with their counterparts in the Senate, have tended to grant most access to powerful national newspapers like *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post*. *Washington Times* reporters may have tried to make contact with Democrats, but had much better luck with sympathetic conservatives in both parties, particularly among the members of the House GOP. When it came to Congress, *The Washington Times* was an outsider.

Not any more.

As a result of years tilling Republican soil, and as a result of the GOP's rise to power in November, the *Times* has

Allan Freedman is a reporter at Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report.



Wesley Pruden

The editor: Major dailies have lost touch with "mainstream America"

majority leader — granted the *Times* an exclusive interview after the November election and kept bigger papers, from *The Washington Post* to *USA Today*, waiting. Reflecting on his friendly relationship with the paper, Armeý observed, "I'm not sure that in the ten years I've been here I've even been invited to the *Post* editorial board."

But the paper's recent new access raises an important question: what is it, anyway? To begin with, *The Washington Times* is like no major city daily in America in the way that it

become such a relevant read inside the Beltway, and such a valuable tip-sheet on Republican maneuvering, that prominent liberal Democrats are quoting the paper on the House floor to score political points against the GOP. In a recent instance, New York's Charles Schumer cited a *Times* story about the Republicans' decision against a major shake-up in the committee system as an authoritative source to illustrate that the revolution was already falling short. Soon after, Schumer's communications director, Josh Isay, said in an interview that Democrats should take out subscriptions.

Republicans have always had a soft spot for the paper, which covers conservatism with such unmatched gusto. In the lean years of Democratic control, Republicans never had to beat the door at the *Times* to attract attention, as they had to do at other news outlets. "I think there are certainly some Republicans who feel certain reporters and certain news outlets have given the Republicans short shrift," says Tony Blankley, Newt Gingrich's press secretary. Richard Armeý — one of the most influential of the conservative congressional leaders and now the House

Other Paper

wears its political heart on its sleeve. Editor-in-chief Wesley Pruden writes a political column that regularly lambastes Bill Clinton even while he directs his paper's political coverage. (Across town, *Washington Post* executive editor Leonard Downie, Jr. takes the journalist's credo of political disinterest so seriously that he does not even vote.)

The *Times's* editorial mission is so clearly political that the paper's recently launched national edition is being aggressively marketed toward a conservative audience. A promotional mailer contains endorsements from Gingrich, Phil Gramm, and Jack Kemp, and promises "a new and reliable source for the information you need — unfiltered by liberal media bias." No major paper in America would dare to be so partisan. "Their stories are representative of a conservative viewpoint," says *New York Times* Washington editor Andrew Rosenthal. "You would have to be visually challenged not to see it."

Pruden, unsurprisingly, disagrees. He claims the *Times* more closely approximates the nation's political center than more liberal papers like *The Washington Post* and, therefore, the paper "gets far closer to the 'objective' than the *Post* does." He says that he'd be surprised if his reporting staff didn't for the most part vote for Bill Clinton in 1992 and that, in fact, he demands fair and balanced reporting.

What his paper does differently, in Pruden's view, is to "cover stories other papers are loath to cover. One of the problems that the major newspapers have is they have gotten so far away from mainstream America that they're no longer aware of what mainstream America is all about."



The speaker: The *Times* has "the real interest of America at heart"

Mainstream America, however, does not seem to be the paper's primary target. In 1993, the editors launched a redesign with an expanded national news section clearly aimed at capturing the attention of Washington insiders. The life-style and metro sections were folded into a single tabloid, and two new briefings columns — *Inside Politics* and *Washington Daybook* — began providing political news nuggets. Eschewing the what-it-all-means perspective pieces that other major dailies run, the *Times* highlights inside-the-Beltway political news, such as the *Times's* page-one curtain raiser last December on the battle for House GOP whip and the recent story about Republicans backing away from selling a House office building — the kind of bread-and-butter pieces that Washington insiders relish. Isay, the aide to Democrat Schumer, says that he can't get that kind of story anywhere else. He thinks that as a conservative newspaper the *Times* is committed to holding the GOP accountable, just as liberals tend to be harder on like-minded politicians. "Since they have such great access," he says, "they are the first ones to know when Republicans

aren't living up to their promises."

Pruden, along with managing editor Josette Shiner and former national editor and now assistant managing editor Francis Coombs, is credited with instilling a take-no-prisoners attitude toward news. Their soldiers have included reporters like Paul Rodriguez, who when he was covering the Hill skulked around the Capitol like a gumshoe, putting himself on a first-name basis with elevator operators, cops on the beat, and tourists. Rodriguez, now the managing editor of

Insight, another Washington Times Corporation publication, could often be seen sipping coffee at the end of the bar at a Capitol Hill watering hole, chatting with politicians. His methods helped him snag a number of exclusives.

In fact, the scandal-and-screw-up beat — *Democratic* scandals and screw-ups, that is — became a special focus of the paper's limited journalistic resources. The *Times* has netted scoops — from the December 1993 piece about White House officials removing Whitewater-related documents from the office of Vincent Foster, to elements of the House post office scandal. The competition followed these stories, but the time and energy the *Times* devoted to them helped drive the news.

A native of Arkansas and the son of a Baptist preacher, Pruden has occupied one newspaper job or another (the Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, Dow Jones's *National Observer*) since his days at Little Rock High School, when he worked at the *Arkansas Gazette*. He's been at the *Times* since 1982, moving up from chief political correspondent and managing editor. His often acerbic column — "Pruden on



Sun Myung Moon

The founder:
The *Times*
can "save
the world"

Politics" — seldom pulls punches. In one of his milder rebukes, he recently offered a "tip to the guys and gals at The Associated Press, struggling up the learning curve on how to cover what's really going on in Washington: the *Post* is no longer Holy Scripture."

Neither is *The Washington Times*, of course. Because of its history of a seemingly ideological approach to the news, the paper has always faced questions about its credibility. Reporters still talk about the dubious 1988 story suggesting that Michael Dukakis consulted a psychiatrist. The paper quoted Dukakis's sister-in-law as saying, "It's possible but I doubt it," and concluded in a headline, DUKAKIS KIN HINTS AT SESSIONS. (Two reporters quit over the editing of the story.)

During the 1992 presidential election, the paper played as a major story the fact that Clinton had taken a trip to Moscow during the Vietnam war. More recently, when it came to reporting Gingrich's response to criticism of his controversial book deal on January 20, the paper turned a blind eye, concluding in a boosterish headline GOP UNITY WITHSTANDS ASSAULTS ON GINGRICH. Howard Kurtz, the *Post*'s

HOW TO READ THE *TIMES*: A FAN IN THE LEFT FIELD BLEACHERS

In January, *The Washington Times* ran a lengthy piece on the alleged drug-running and CIA misdoings in Mena, Arkansas. It showcased the full repertoire of right-wing attack journalism. The insinuation and sleazy sources. The ritual acknowledgments that there is no proven link to the president, followed by gleeful recitals of more sordid allegations, as though there were. This kind of reporting comes as no surprise to those respectable Washington insiders who still dismiss the *Times* as a Moonie rag.

But wait. On the jump page were mug shots of, not Clinton and Webster Hubbell, but Edwin Meese and Oliver North. The *Times* rumormongers were implicating the Reagan and Bush administrations too!

Another recent front page featured a story on how environmental education is "traumatizing" children, but alongside it ran the lowdown on how Senate Republicans are trying to muzzle Jesse Helms on foreign policy. That's the *Times*: an aggressive right-wing tilt, but unpredictable, and sometimes willing to air the Republican dirty laundry too.

Quietly, over the last decade, the *Times* has evolved into a contentious, irreverent city daily. (In most

other U.S. cities, the *Times* would be the meatiest and most substantial paper in town.) The *Post* still has the big picture and the classy writers. But the *Times* focuses on people, motives, and inside plays in a kind of high tabloid style that gets closer to the way that Washington really works.

That doesn't mean the *Times* has totally shed the partisan traits that won it early and deserved contempt. When Dick Armey, the House majority leader, says he's going to fight an increase in the minimum wage, the *Times* plays it like a main event. Its fawning coverage of Newt Gingrich's inauguration week called to mind *Women's Wear Daily* at a Hamptons luncheon.

But since then, the *Times* has taken great delight in giving Newt the needle. There was the item on the speaker's lesbian sister, for example. (She's a Democrat, too!) When Gingrich admonished his fellow Republicans to be more circumspect in dealing with the media, the *Times* added a droll subhead: "But Colleagues Note Speaker's Own Gaffes."

Generally, over the years the *Times* has become less protective of Republicans. It has given ample play to Democratic counterpunches — their attacks

media reporter, once called the *Times* "a happy anachronism — a throwback to a simpler time, when Whigs and mugwumps strode the land and newspapers . . . were unapologetically partisan vehicles. . . ."

The paper's sourcing has also raised questions. While editors defend the paper's use of unattributed sources, many of its most sensational scoops have relied on blind sourcing. For example, Rodriguez's March 1993 story on 900 dial-a-porn calls charged to a credit card issued to House Speaker Thomas Foley's office fizzled quickly for lack of documentation, and many reporters observed at the time that other papers would have subjected the piece to greater scrutiny before going to press.

A bizarre January 3 story about a possible drug- and arms-smuggling operation based in Mena, Arkansas (see sidebar), concluded in a headline that A TRAIL OF PERSISTENT RUMORS LEADS TO MENA. The piece conceded that the "Mena story is fraught with conjecture" but at the same time described it as having the "aura of a bomb ticking beneath the feet of the famous and the pow-



Paul Rodriguez

A reporter: Scoops and blind sources

erful." It was the the kind of story — because of its open reliance on "conjecture" — that would not likely appear at other major dailies without more substantive confirmation.

Then there is the continuing connection to the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, who officially has a somewhat hazy, hands-off relationship with the paper. He is known formally as the paper's founder, but he does not sit on the board of the paper's parent company, News World Communications. Each member of the board, however, is a member of Moon's Unification Church. Moon disclosed in May 1992 that he had invested "close to \$1 billion" since the paper's founding in 1982. He said he wanted to make the newspaper "an instrument to save America and the world."

Salvation, it seems, comes from conservative politics. Still, Pruden and some of his editors and reporters say that the reason they have concentrated so much investigative fire on Democrats is not due to ideology, but to the imperative to cover those in power. Now, they insist, the paper will be equally scrupulous with the GOP. ♦

on the new majority for refusing to give up personal use of frequent-flyer miles, for example. It has noted the new revolving door from business lobbies to Republican committee staffs, such as the oil and health insurance lobbyists now on Ways and Means. The *Times* reports the straight poop on the machinations between Gingrich and Bob Dole, and Dole and Phil Gramm, and the tensions within the conservative camp on issues like term limits and official school prayer.

Of course, where Gingrich gets a poke, Clinton gets a bludgeon. Whenever you see Whitewater or Foster in a *Times* headline, you can be sure that the goons are crawling out of the paper's psyche. You also need to be wary of anything called "News Analysis," which is where the right-wing hacks come out and take their turns. Donald Lambro will reliably convey the staggering insights that liberals are spenders and government is full of waste. The commentary and op-ed pages have the range and wit of *Pravda* in the Brezhnev years. Paul Craig Roberts will repeat his anti-tax chant. And so forth.

The news pages do have an eye for the conser-

vative slant as well. You will be sure to hear about the black regent of the California university system who wants to abolish affirmative action, for example. You'll get the front-page infomercial on the NRA official who wrote a book on the right to bear arms. But you will also get the positive side of social trends, such as home schooling, which the establishment papers tend to hold at arm's length because credentialed experts don't approve.

Basically the *Times* is a populist conservative paper rather than a slavishly Republican one. As a Washingtonian whose populist instincts run in a different direction from the *Times's*, I find it useful to argue with the paper each day; it's a taste of what Republicans have gone through with the *Post* for years — and it sharpened their polemical edges. And I'm grateful to have a competing city daily. In an odd way, Washington needs the *Times* for the same reason that America needs National Public Radio — to provide diversity and keep the big guys on their toes.

Jonathan Rowe is a contributing editor of *The Washington Monthly*.

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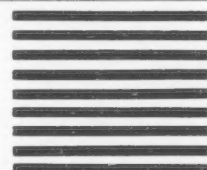
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Reporting from the Razor's Edge

One day in 1990, I sat down at the Sheraton-Carlton hotel near the White House for an exclusive interview with presidential barber Milton Pitts, the man who weaned Richard Nixon from Brylcreem and scaled down Ronald Reagan's pompadour. I showed Pitts a photo of Representative Norm Dicks of Washington (whom I cover), in which the Democrat's hair billows on top and fluffs out unevenly above the ears. Pitts studied the photo, frowning and pursing his lips, then pronounced: "I would definitely like to work on his hair, and I'd definitely change it. It's a very bad haircut." In the interests of fairness, I ran the comment by Dicks's spokesman, George Behan, and his barber, Joe Quattrone. Both stood by Dicks's hair. Even so, when he read Pitts's comment in my paper, Dicks rushed to get a trim.

It was one of the few times that I, a detached observer, had caused a politician to act quickly and decisively, and the only time an article of mine had spawned a *Revealing Anecdote* after publication. I had Pitts to thank.

The incident gave me insight into why the Milton Pitts clip pile is so large — hundreds of profiles and quotations in dozens of newspapers and voluminous obituaries when he recently expired. He may not have made lists of top newsmakers or Deep Throat candidates, but he had an intuitive grasp of what journalists require, and he gave it to them. Above all, he understood the reporter's need to tell a story, with a beginning, middle, end, colorful characters, humor, dramatic turns, and those *Revealing Anecdotes* which, in these days of A-section personality journalism, have become as indispensable as breaking news. As a source, Pitts provided fly-on-the-wall stuff about the four GOP presidents he served (e.g., Nixon's barbershop remarks on resignation day — "the same as usual," followed by a somber self-defense). As a sound-biter on vanity, and its bonfires, Pitts pointed out precisely how certain *Anecdotes* were supposedly *Revealing* (as in Clinton's infat-

uation with Hollywood stylist Cristophe, more of which below). And, as a news subject, he cast himself as a kind of living sitcom character: the South Carolina farm boy who rose, Horatio Alger-like, by dint of elbow grease, hair mousse, and huge talent, to clip heads of state while never losing sight of small-town, Floyd-the-barber roots.

Pitts had an uncanny way of providing journalists with irresistible narrative touches. His very name, rolling with assonance off the tongue, fit the character: Pitts, suggesting lowliness; Milton, evoking the poet, as if this were a man who had taken a humble profession and elevated it to art. And, in a plot twist worthy of Dickens, Pitts died on Christmas Day, his heart giving

out not long after he lost his barbershop lease and told a *Washington Post* reporter from his hospital bed: "It looks like this is the end of the line for the best hairstylist in Washington."

Unfortunately, as Joan Didion has pointed out, the journalist's desire to tell a good tale often leads to "understandings, tacit agreements, small and large, to overlook the observable in the interests of obtaining a dramatic story line." Pitts and the press were a small, but telling, case in point.

Take the notion that Pitts was a barber of extraordinary skill and originality — "the Chagall of male coif, the Leonardo of political locks," as the April 16, 1985, *Washington Post* put it. The story line persisted even after Pitts — who, like Milton, the

poet, suffered from failing eyesight — began to lose his touch, according to a person in the old White House orbit. This source recalls that at least one cabinet member emerged from Pitts's chair looking "skinned," and that Nancy Reagan once sent an emissary to complain that Pitts had cut her husband's hair so short that she had to keep it down with gel. Such allegations remained sub rosa. Reporters had no desire to spike the Chagall Leonardo script.



Milton Pitts: no ordinary barber

That script also included the element of great originality — as in Pitts's claim to have invented the landmark flattop style in his shop on Connecticut Avenue in 1952. He said he was interrupted in mid-crew cut, having leveled off the top of a college student's head. "What do you call that haircut, Milt?" asked another customer. Pitts, noticing a headline about an aircraft carrier in the customer's newspaper, spontaneously replied, "It's a flattop"; the student's friends all asked for the same cut; and the craze took off. This was too good to pass up, and versions of Pitts's story were disseminated by the media. It was also too good to be true. According to Eric Partridge's *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, the haircut term was in use in Australia in 1945 — seven years before Pitts claimed to have invented it — and was probably derived from even earlier usage in America.

Another element of the Pitts story line was nostalgia. He saw to it that he came off as a Norman Rockwell barber

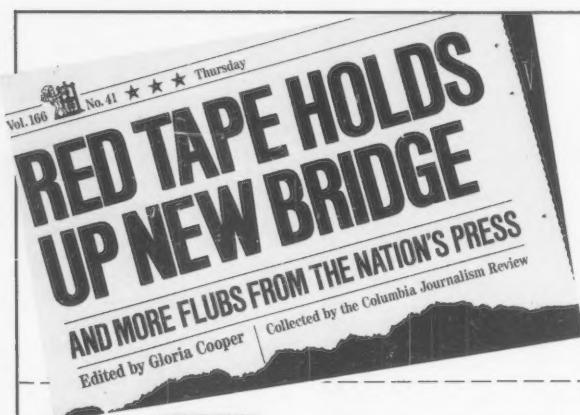
at heart, not some stylist to the stars. Under Reagan, Pitts gained much from this media tag. President Carter, of "wimp factor" fame, had replaced Pitts with beauticians Yves and Nancy Graux. But Pitts was invited back in

Pitts layered, shampooed, moussed — and styled the news

1981 as part of the Reagan revolution's reversion to the days when men were men. Aide Jim Baker explained that Reagan was "a president who likes to have his hair cut by a barber"; and

Time, on July 26, 1982, described the shift from unisex beautician to barber as "a return to traditional values." Initially, the Grauxes remained in the White House for other customers. But Pitts stuck in his scissors (e.g., United Press International reported that "Pitts, a traditionalist, did not approve of the shop being used as a styling salon"). The Grauxes, in turn, accused Pitts of watering their shampoo. But he prevailed and they were shown the door. Score one for Pitts, the spinmeister — for, not to split hairs, he was no ordinary barber. He was (as he'd admit when it suited him) a stylist like the Grauxes who layered, shampooed, moussed, offered facials. Norman Rockwell, indeed.

So much for Pitts, the man. What of the news analyst? According to Pitts, a president who overhauled his appearance in a big way was revealing self-indulgence and self-doubt, raising questions about his future in office. Thus, when Carter changed his



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part, Pitts said, according to *Time* magazine: "That guy is not going to last." The barber raised similar doubts about Clinton, who summoned Beverly Hills stylist Cristophe for a \$200 cut on the plane at LAX. Pitts (a \$25-a-head man) zinged the president for losing touch with his roots — "There's no excuse for a person paying \$200 for a haircut. That's showmanship," he told reporters — and the press took up this going-Hollywood condemnation in hundreds of articles, many on page one.

L'affair Cristophe, like Carter's killer rabbit, and patrician President Bush's problem identifying a cash register, were Revealing Anecdotes of the highest order — each trumpeted as emblematic of inner shortcomings. However, when real-world events come across with all the punch of literary symbols, neatly advancing some story line, one has to look carefully (as I once learned to my embarrassment with the flattop origins yarn).

Did Carter really cower in the face of an aggressive rabbit in ultimate confirmation of the wimp factor? The sourcing on this tale (in which Carter and the paddling rabbit were allegedly out on a catfish pond) has always seemed a bit flimsy. Had Bush really never seen a computerized cash register, pointing up how out-of-touch he was — or was he misconstrued, as aides maintained? The truth is obscure. Did Clinton's haircut at LAX really snarl air traffic, holding up common folk for hours, as initially reported? Evidently not.

Was Hollywood's Cristophe any more an embodiment of a rarefied, unreal world than Milton Pitts, whose job it was to make pols look the parts they were scripted to play on TV? Definitely not. Reagan, after all, was a creature of Hollywood impersonating Mr. Smith in Washington and Pitts was simply part of the D.C. studio apparatus that helped him put on an effective show. Hollywood and Washington are

our two biggest factories of ersatz reality. So, contrary to the press spin, using Cristophe was no big deviation by Clinton.

In closing, a small confession. Recall the story about Representative Dicks rushing off to get a trim upon hearing Pitts's jibe. I used it because it satisfied my narrative need to demonstrate Pitts's jibe. I omitted one fact for the same reason: the barber Dicks rushed off to was Joe Quattrone — the guy he'd been using all along. What is one to make of Dicks's choice? Was he heeding Pitts — or defying him? This is the kind of murkiness that ruins a good story. No one wants to do that. So, on second thought, let's forget I ever brought it up.

Christopher Hanson

Christopher Hanson is Washington correspondent for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and a contributing editor of CJR. Intern Matthew Leone provided research assistance.

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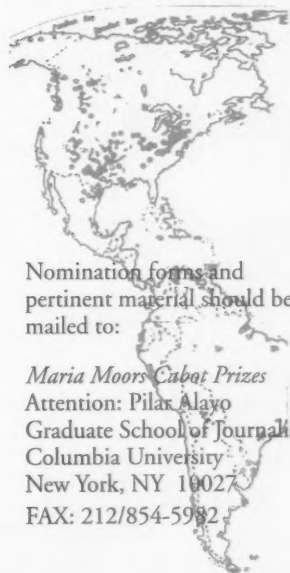
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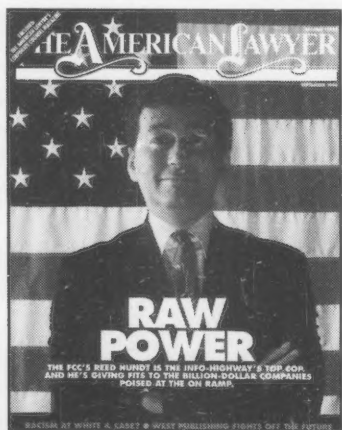
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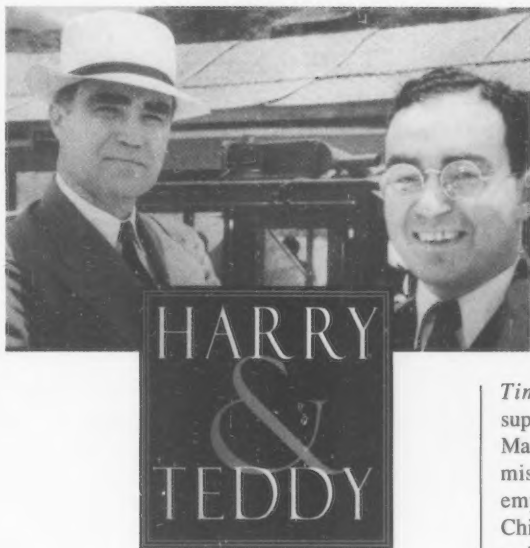
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The Great Wall of China

by Seymour Topping



Over the past half-century, the United States suffered its most costly foreign policy setbacks in Vietnam and earlier in China, and in both episodes journalists were key players. In Vietnam reporters stirred public opinion at home with their unrestrained coverage of the war, hastening American withdrawal. But a very different chapter was written in China, one in which a coterie of editors involved the United States more deeply in the country's civil war — and persisted after their side lost — by censoring and distorting the news. That history is recalled in Thomas Griffith's *Harry & Teddy*. Harry is Henry R. Luce, editor-in-chief and publisher of *Time* and *Life* magazines, who is depicted as having been

Seymour Topping is Sanpaolo Professor of International Journalism at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. A former managing editor of The New York Times, he covered the Chinese civil war from 1946 to 1949 for The Associated Press and International News Service. His book Journey Between Two Chinas was published in 1972.

largely instrumental in persuading the United States to adopt the failed China policy, and Teddy is Theodore H. White, celebrated writer on China who differed with Luce on policy but served as his hapless employee from 1939 to 1946. White went on to distinguish himself as a political reporter, winning a Pulitzer Prize for *The Making of the President 1960*, his classic reprise of John F. Kennedy's triumph over Richard Nixon. Although much of what Griffith relates can be found in the works of Luce's biographers and White's own autobiography *In Search of History*, the author in exploring the relationship of two of the most interesting journalists of their generation puts together a fresh and readable account of a tumultuous period in American history.

Griffith, who worked for the Luce organization for forty-five years as a reporter and top editor, documents how Luce manipulated the news columns of *Time* and *Life* magazines to rally American support for Chiang Kai-shek in his civil war with Mao Tse-tung. Luce, devout son of a Presbyterian missionary, who built his powerful publishing empire from scratch, was convinced that only Chiang could preserve China from communism and might even convert its people to Christianity. After the communist conquest of the China mainland in 1949, Luce's single-minded campaigning was a major factor in impelling the United States to sever all communication with the most powerful nation in Asia and one-fifth of the world's population.

HARRY & TEDDY

BY THOMAS GRIFFITH
RANDOM HOUSE. 320 PP. 24

The reporting on China in Luce's magazines differed from what Americans were reading in other publications. Such correspondents as A.T. Steele of the *New York Herald Tribune*, Henry R. Lieberman and Tillman Durdin of *The New York Times*, and Phil Potter of the *Baltimore Sun*, among others, were faithfully recording China developments. The critical difference was that these correspondents and their publications, bound by self-imposed disciplines of evenhanded reporting, made much less of an impact simply because the highly popular *Time* and *Life* magazines were unrestrained in injecting Luce's

opinions into their news columns.

Griffith's book is subtitled "The Turbulent Friendship of Press Lord Henry R. Luce and His Favorite Reporter, Theodore H. White." But the intimate story of the relationship, as told by Griffith, who was given access to the voluminous files of Time Inc. and White's private estate papers, hardly bears out that description. Infatuation with China drew the two men together, but Luce's friendship never extended to a tolerance of White's views. While posted in China

White endured censorship and distortion of his dispatches to *Time*. Distraught, he protested and frequently spoke of quitting. But as Griffith explains it, his impoverished childhood in a Jewish ghetto in Boston had taught him fiscal caution and made him fearful of being without a job. It was only after being ordered home in 1945 from his post as correspondent in Chungking, Chiang's wartime capital, that White was able to make his views publicly known. Taking a six-month leave of absence, he joined with

Annalee Jacoby, another *Time* staffer, to write *Thunder Out of China*, a vivid portrait of wartime China, which became a best-seller.

The book indicted the Chiang regime for ineptitude and corruption and warned that continued American support would only be self-defeating. It urged the United States to adopt a neutral stance in the civil war so that it would be in a position eventually to encourage growth of democratic institutions in China. White admired the discipline of the Maoist forces and was charmed by Chou En-lai, but he did not embrace the Chinese communists. White's views of Chiang's prospects were consonant with those of generals Joseph W. Stilwell and George C. Marshall, who sought on presidential missions to reform and sustain Chiang's forces; with those of John King Fairbank, the eminent American scholar; and with those of the top China specialists in the State Department. All were to become targets, if not victims, when Senator Joseph McCarthy poisoned the political climate in the United States with his accusatory cry "Who lost China?"

For Luce the views expressed in *Thunder Out of China* precluded any possibility that he would approve of White's returning to China for his magazines. He was unyielding when White, whose attitude toward the communists had hardened, pleaded: "But Harry, I want you to know I have changed my mind about China." Denied any acceptable posting, White resigned. Nevertheless, his friendship with Luce continued, although somewhat intermittently. In Griffith's description of the relationship, Luce emerges as the more principled. He seeks out White, enjoying his wit and engaging personality, but is steadfast in his attitude as an employer; White, relishing proximity to power, flatters Luce while raging against him privately. In 1957 in an off-the-record interview with the *New York Post*, White speaks of Luce as "largely responsible for the dead end our policy has reached in the Far East. He's more than a publisher, or editor, or journalist. He's a sovereign; he has enormous power, a power uncon-

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trolled, unchecked, and thereby dangerous." When the interview unexpectedly became public, White rather fulsomely apologized to Luce. In 1964, when Luce retired, three years before his death, White wrote to him saying: "As a reporter I feel orphaned by the retirement of the greatest of American editors."

White was only one of a group of brilliant elitist editors and talented writers who yielded to Luce's dictation despite deep resentment about the ruthless manner in which he compelled them to slant the news. On major political issues affecting China and, domestically, the Republican party, Luce was willing to anger his staff as well as "jeopardize the integrity of his magazines," Griffith tells us. "*Time* magazine could no longer be counted on to treat each side fairly; it distorted or concealed facts favorable to the other side; by its selective use of pictures and acerbic adjectives it maligned its opposition."

Griffith repeatedly returns to the question of why Luce's staff continued to work for him despite their unhappiness about his management of the news. *Time* magazine reporters not infrequently were berated for living with the rewriting of their copy in what was derisively called group journalism rather than give up their lush perks. Some, like John Hersey, who was a Moscow correspondent, did resign. At one point, Hersey complained, he had filed 11,000 words only to have Whittaker Chambers, then the foreign editor, use a mere 168. Chambers, a former Soviet agent who converted to militant anti-communism and bore witness against Alger Hiss at Hiss's perjury trial, was for years one of Luce's closest advisers on foreign affairs.

Many of those who worked for Luce, including Griffith, who served as editor of *Life* and assistant managing editor of *Time*, were attracted to his publications because he offered them the challenge and excitement of a new kind of journalism. Luce recruited such writers as Archibald MacLeish, John Kenneth Galbraith, and James Agee for *Fortune*, another of the successful magazines he started. *Time* and *Life* were hailed by educators for

stimulating greater public interest in fields that newspapers had largely neglected, such as science, medicine, education, and philosophy. Some writers enjoyed the uninhibited *Time* style, which honored wit more than fact. Others, while troubled by Luce's excesses, agreed with his credo that value judgments are inescapable in reporting the news. "The judgmental journalism Luce exercised in the news columns is now commonplace in newspapers and magazines that once denounced the practice," Griffith insists. He cites the current trend to news analysis and commentary and instances where news and opinion are sometimes combined in the same story. Although there is some validity in the comparison, Griffith ignores the essential difference. Editors and reporters rather than press lords in present-day journalism are in the main making the decisions about content, writing styles, and ethical frameworks. Today's corporate owners are more interested in profits than in the substance of the news. Time Warner dictates budgets to the editors of *Time* magazine, not editorial policy. That is not unalloyed good news for editors. Preoccupation with the bottom line can mean fewer resources for quality journalism.

Up From Humbug

by Frederick Allen

On April 9, 1836, a prostitute named Helen Jewett was axed to death in a stylish New York City brothel; the police arrested a dry-goods clerk who had visited her that night to celebrate his nineteenth birthday. Five years later, in September 1841, a printer named Samuel Adams was bludgeoned to death and stuffed into a crate to be shipped out of town; the police arrested the brother of Samuel Colt, the inventor of the revolver. These two

Frederick Allen is the managing editor of American Heritage.

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crimes are plenty interesting in and of themselves, but for Andie Tucher, a producer at ABC News, they are even more interesting for how they were covered by the city's new penny newspapers, and for what that coverage says about American mass journalism at its very inception. For as she shows, the birth of mass media in America was the birth of all the problems and conflicts and discontents with mass media that trouble us today.

The first inexpensive, independent newspaper aimed at a large readership, the New York *Sun*, was founded in 1833 by Benjamin Day. Within two years Day had two prominent competitors, the New York *Transcript* and James Gordon Bennett's *Herald*. When the Jewett case broke, the three papers jumped on the story. The *Sun* reported that the victim was "intelligent, beautiful, and accomplished"; the *Transcript*, that she was "very genteel and pretty." Bennett claimed that he got in to see the body and pronounced it "as white, as full, as polished as the purest Parian marble. The perfect figure . . . surpassed in every respect the Venus de Medicis."

Beyond that, the papers told wildly opposing stories. The *Transcript* reported flatly that the accused, Richard Robinson, "alone is the guilty individual," and the *Sun* said the same. The *Herald*, arguing that no "man in any respect" could "act so terribly towards lovely woman" and that the use of an ax indicated "the vengeance of female

**FROTH & SCUM:
TRUTH, BEAUTY, GOODNESS, AND
THE AX MURDER IN AMERICA'S
FIRST MASS MEDIUM**

BY ANDIE TUCHER
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS
257 PP. \$34.95 CLOTH, \$13.95 PAPER.

wickedness — the burning of female revenge," proposed a conspiracy theory, a plot to frame Robinson concocted by "the licentious inmates of a fashionable brothel" and backed by "part of the police establishment, which is rotten to the heart" and "an indicted thief and editor of a daily paper" — that is, Benjamin Day of the *Sun*.

If that sounds preposterous, it's because it is. But the other two papers' angle, while it accorded with

the facts better, was really no closer to the full truth of the story. If Bennett's *Herald* portrayed the murdered prostitute as evil incarnate and Robinson as her innocent victim, the *Sun* and the *Transcript* presented her as a pure naif and Robinson as an utterly inhuman monster.

The newspapers were all indulging in the spirit of the times. People enjoyed obvious exaggerations and untruths. They stood in line to see the woman P.T. Barnum told them was the 161-year-old former nurse of George Washington, and they snapped up newspapers to read an astronomer's descriptions of spherical amphibians living on the moon. They didn't expect strict reporting, exactly, from newspapers for which the concept of objectivity had not yet fully developed. As Tucher puts it, the papers' readers were guided "by two unspoken but clearly understood presumptions. An untruth that does not deceive is not a lie. And a truth that does not satisfy is no better than a lie."

The first of those presumptions is familiar to anybody who has ever enjoyed the *Weekly World News* at the checkout counter or the horoscope in the daily paper. The second presumption is far more subtle and pervasive and dangerous, for it rejects all truths that won't appeal to the reader.

What all the newspapers were doing was giving their specific audiences a truth that they could and would accept. As Tucher explains it, the *Sun* and the *Transcript* were speaking to a solidly working-class audience for whom the well-connected Robinson and his attorneys — who got him acquitted — represented oppressive power and its abuse. Bennett was addressing readers who were slightly better off; they would largely identify with Robinson, and see Jewett as a subversive threat to the order and morality of their ways.

The scene was somewhat changed five years later, when John Colt murdered Samuel Adams. By then Bennett's *Herald* was the only powerful survivor of those three original penny dailies; its main competition was a newcomer, Horace

outstanding, superior, **terrific**, superlative, exceptional, superb, classic, **sterling**, great, **tremendous**, wonderful, notable, fine, **topnotch**, first-rate, first-class, matchless, peerless, preeminent, **exemplary**

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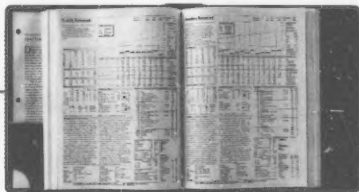
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For the truth



Greeley's *Tribune*. Both papers were going after the same audience now, and it consisted of a rising middle class. Greeley was an entirely earnest do-gooder, and the sides drawn up in reporting this murder were, as Tucher writes, "between sensationalism and moralism, amusement and education, voyeurism and verdict making, celebration of the city and fear of it, glorification of crime and condemnation of it."

The prudish Greeley didn't even like covering the story, but he felt obligated to: he felt the murderer's descent into vice provided a valuable lesson for other young men alone in the city. Bennett contended with Greeley's high-mindedness by presenting himself as performing a civic duty too, the duty to reveal every fact of the case, no matter how ugly — but he was also no longer pursuing rumors and dubious leads. Because of that he missed a sensational aspect of the case, a scoop that would have shown the murderer behaving with almost saintly nobility in a family matter in which his famous brother was the scoundrel. Once again, the pursuit of simple truth prevented the discovery of fuller truth.

"A good many problems plague the modern mass media," Tucher says, "but looming large among them is this: we still expect journalism to tell us the Truth. Our Truth." In a nineteen-page epilogue, she gives a brisk summary of the history of newspaper journalism since 1841, describing "the enthronement of the objective voice" that began with the rise of the modern *New York Times* at the end of the century and the threat to that objectivity today, with "the

public's growing conviction that true objectivity is not actually possible." She sketches a severely fragmented journalistic world now in which people find the particular truth they want in their own favorite medium while universally railing against the mainstream national

media for opposing their point of view whatever it is.

Her final reflections should interest anyone who takes journalism seriously. She writes that "the root of our ongoing difficulties and disillusionments with the news coverage we read and hear" lies in the fact that "we tend to confuse the product of journalism with its processes. Journalism itself is essentially a process, a way to search for truth, not a tool to ratify it. . . . Various methods serve the process of journalism. Humbug itself is a method, not a conclusion; it was the arduous task of working through truths, comparing them, debating them, and judging them that allowed readers to form their own conclusions about Jewett's death and Robinson's guilt. Objectivity," she goes on, "is a method, not an outcome; it was the painstaking work of examining, investigating, and observing that allowed the *Herald* to paint such vivid descriptions of Colt's last day [he committed suicide on the day he was to be executed] that readers in Little Rock could see the scene with as much clarity as any denizen of Broadway."

Truth certainly is as elusive and personal today as it was in 1836 or 1841. Just consider the truth about any anti-abortion demonstration, or the truth about Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill. Who doesn't feel strongly that he knows for himself what that truth is? Who wants to read an account of either that doesn't accord with that truth? Yet the idea of a single overriding objective truth in either of those matters may be beyond anything journalism can achieve.

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Dedicated Dan

By Neil Hickey

Dan Rather loves covering the news. No, Dan Rather is *obsessive* about covering the news. How do we know? He informs us of that redundantly in his new memoir, a sequel to *The Camera Never Blinks*, published back in 1977 when he was a mere CBS News correspondent and not yet the inheritor of Walter Cronkite's illustrious anchor chair. In these latest dispatches from the front, we learn: "I have dodged bullets on three continents. I've been maced, mugged, and arrested by the KGB." . . . "I . . . am . . . dedicated to the idea of being there, seeing, hearing, sniffing the story . . . Every instinct you have tells you to follow the fire trucks." . . . "When I sense a big one

brewing, . . . inside me there is this feeling of the caged cat." . . . "I have been described in print as someone with a 'never-ending, consuming passion for news: what's news, what's going to be news, what's not news, what could be news, does anyone else have the same news . . . ' That description is dead-solid perfect. I embody all of that and to a fault . . . [H]ow tiresome and boring it must be for anyone near me who doesn't share this addiction."

In the present volume, Rather documents how he has fed that addiction since his earlier jottings. (A 1991 offering, *I Remember*, was mostly about his dirt-poor upbringing in Texas; *The Camera Never Blinks Twice* went to press before his recent sortie to Haiti, where he scored exclusive interviews with General Raoul Cédras — and we'll doubtless hear about that in *The Camera Never Blinks Thrice*.) Here, we travel with

him every agonizing step of the way in his famous 1980 anabasis into Afghanistan, swathed in native dress and dubbed by the irreverent "Gunga Dan." And again: Rather in Tiananmen Square for the civil unrest of 1989; in the Soviet Union and at the Berlin Wall as communism crumbled; in Cuba for some jawboning with Fidel Castro; being roused unceremoniously from his Baghdad hotel and driven by armed guards to a midnight interview with Saddam Hussein; battling restrictions on press coverage of the Persian Gulf war; broadcasting live from the Mogadishu airport as marines stormed ashore (in the glare of TV cameras) in Somalia;

Neil Hickey is a contributing editor to TV Guide.

returning to Vietnam last year with General Norman Schwarzkopf to assess the post-war changes. (" . . . I stand atop the Majestic Hotel [in Ho Chi Minh City] and weep. Alone. Weep for the dead . . . And for all the memories.")

Along the way in this bumptious chronicle, Rather takes a few



ANTHONY ST. JAMES

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entertaining sidetrips: jousting with George Bush during the 1988 campaign over how much the then vice president

THE CAMERA NEVER BLINKS TWICE: THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF A TELEVISION JOURNALIST

BY DAN RATHER,
WITH MICKEY HERSKOWITZ
WILLIAM MORROW AND COMPANY
368 PP. \$23

knew about the Iran arms-for-hostages deal; angrily departing his anchor chair — and leaving CBS screens dark nationwide for six minutes — to protest the network's decision to stick with a women's U.S. Open tennis semi-final between Steffi Graf and Lori McNeil, instead of switching to coverage of Pope

John Paul II's arrival in Miami. ("Outrageous," fumes Rather. Four years later, CBS was the only network to preempt one of the presidential debates between Bush and Bill Clinton. "We were committed to the baseball playoffs," he laments. "The trend is worrisome.")

One of the volume's most engaging yarns is a flashback to President Nixon's 1972 trip to Yugoslavia when Rather was White House correspondent. Up to that time, he'd never missed a press plane, he boasts, "even in the days when I stayed out all night and drank too much soda pop." One late night in Belgrade, however, he imbibed quantities of "'paint thinner' . . . a distinctly lethal kind of fresh-brewed Slavic" spirits (come on, Dan, that's called moonshine where you come from) and consequently overslept, thus being stranded alone and without his passport. His frantic, terror-stricken efforts to catch up with the presidential party dramatize definitively, and amusingly, the perils of attempting to combine good times with good reporting.

But Dan Rather's finest moment came not on the journalistic hustings but at a lectern in Miami in September 1993, when he addressed the national convention of the Radio and Television News Directors Association. It was a speech cast from the matrix of Edward R. Murrow's legendary 1958 address to the same group. "How goes the battle for quality, for truth and justice" in broadcast news since Murrow delivered his indictment, Rather asked. "Not very well."

A few arrows from his quiver:

We have allowed this great instrument . . . to be squandered and cheapened . . . [T]he best among us hang their heads in embarrassment, even shame . . . ashamed of the many things we have allowed our craft, our profession, our life's work to become . . . [F]or too long we have answered to the worst, not to the best, within ourselves and within our audience.

They've got us putting more fuzz and wuzz on the air, cop-shop stuff, so as to compete not with other news programs

but with entertainment programs (including those posing as news programs) for dead bodies, mayhem, and lurid tales . . . Thoughtfully written analysis is out . . . Hire lookers, not writers. Do powder-puff, not probing, interviews . . . Make nice, not news . . . A climate of fear, at all levels, has been created, without a fight. We — you and I — have allowed them to do it, and even helped them to do it.

We've all gone Hollywood — we've all succumbed to the Hollywoodization of the news — because we were afraid not to . . . We put videotape through a Cuisinart trying to come up with high-speed, MTV-style cross-cuts . . . We give the best slots to gossip and prurience . . . We have gone so far down the Infotainment trail that we'll be a long time getting back to where we started — if ever.

Fight back, he advised his audience of TV journalists. Make a little noise. Fight the fear that leads to "showbizification." Produce local versions of *Nightline* and *Sunday Morning*. Be confident that people will watch serious news programs that are well written and well produced. Avoid market researchers. Prove that electronic news is not "doomed to be completely and forever overwhelmed by commercialism and entertainment values."

A few critics argued at the time that Rather's diatribe was a wee bit overwrought. Perhaps. But it came from a newsman who has spent his life in the journalistic trenches, who wears his passion for the news unabashedly on his sleeve like a Boy Scout merit badge, who has taken the risks and earned his right to those views — perhaps more so than any other "star" TV news figure now on the scene. Being a television newscaster (much less an anchor man), says Rather, "is an incredibly vain, self-centered, and egocentric line of work." *The Camera Never Blinks Twice* (and its predecessor) may document the truth of that remark, but it also provides an endearing and useful record of a life in the super-fast journalistic lane by one of the game's most fervid and capable practitioners.

The Gray Lady and the "P" Word



SANDY GERS

Rebecca Sinkler, who recently resigned after five years as editor of The New York Times Book Review to devote full time to writing, was a speaker, along with her Times colleague William Safire, at a panel discussion last fall on the topic, "Where is the English Language Going?" This article is adapted from her remarks.

Let me tell you about something that happened to me when I was preliterate, really. I was in the bathtub, and my mother was giving me a bath. Something happened that annoyed me and I let out an expletive. The word was damn. It'll be hard for anyone under the age of fifty to believe that my mother scolded me for such a mild expression, but she did. "Why can't I say damn?" I asked. "Franklin does." I was referring to my big brother. It's all right for boys to curse, said my mother, but not for girls. It was the first time I remember being told that boys could do things that girls couldn't. So after a period of compliance with my mother's language rules, I burst into a fiery adolescence with one of the foulest mouths you would wish to hear on anyone of any sex.

Everyone I knew was talking dirty. It was one of the grosser aspects of 1950s-style feminism. But I guess it



did help change the rules for language. At any rate they were changing, and women were being allowed to say and be much more than they had been. So I was getting kind of mellow and proper.

And then, of course, because fate always is there ready to slip you a banana peel, I ended up at *The New York Times*. And things that I was allowed to say as a reporter and things that were allowed to be said as an editor at other papers were verboten in New York. We couldn't say Ms. when I arrived at *The New York Times* and we couldn't say gay; we couldn't say damn either without going to a higher editor for permission. I remember a disastrous stomach-turning moment when we had to pull an essay at the last minute because Abe Rosenthal, the executive editor of *The New York Times*, would not allow Thomas Pynchon to use the term "bad ass." And Thomas Pynchon would not allow Abe Rosenthal to "censor" him.

We were not allowed at that time either to use the "p" word, which brings me to another anecdote. One that involves my estimable colleague, Bill Safire. The "p" word in this case was actually "pee." In September of 1986 I received from John Irving the review of a book we had assigned to him, a novel set in the wild west. And the denouement of the book involved a contest. Two cowboys settle a feud by doing something that even in our enlightened times girls cannot do. When Mr. Irving described the event he had the sense

and sensitivity to tone down his language for the *Times* and he used the words "peeing contest." But it wasn't genteel enough for the *Times*.

Arthur Gelb, then deputy editor of *The New York Times*, said, "No peeing in this paper, God damn it." So I argued and I fought and I squealed and I complained and I no doubt said damn and a lot worse. But I wasn't willing to sacrifice my job, so I went back to Irving and he was -----, and rightly. But he proved less tough than Pynchon and the review ran with a modification, of which more later.

I had been turned into a language cop and was plenty angry myself, but nothing compared to when I picked up the paper a couple of months later and saw what John Irving had cooked up with Bill Safire. Irving had ratted to Safire about what had happened. And Safire had written about the whole crazy thing in his column, which was very amusing, except that Safire had gotten to use the word "piss"!

He went on: "John Irving the novelist called me a few months ago," Safire wrote, "to protest a decision made by *The New York Times* not to use that widely used euphemism in a book review he had written. . . . Although authors of the stature of John Irving are cited in dictionaries to illustrate the development and acceptance of words, the following line was published in the Book Review section of the *Times*: 'The wild journey that only Cecil and Margaret managed to finish ends outside the tent of a trader who was famous for winning bladder-voiding competitions.'" I blush. I should have quit.

At any rate, when I picked this up I was you know what. The boys had gotten to say once again what the girl had been forbidden to, which may be why I accepted this invitation to come here. I knew some day if I bided my time I would be able to get back at Mr. Safire. So here I am again, doing what my mother told me not to. ♦

SHORT TAKES

HOW TO WRITE A LEAD

One of the first stories Dave Davies had done at the *Philadelphia Daily News* had turned out to be a front-page exclusive on a proposal by Mayor Goode for an unearned income tax, a story that the *Inquirer* had missed. Davies had finished his research and written the lead: "Faced with the likelihood that city council will reject his proposed increase in the city wage tax, Mayor Goode yesterday sent council a proposal that would impose a tax on interest from bank accounts and other kinds of so-called unearned income." But his editor had turned thumbs-down. "This is a good lead for the *Inquirer*," he said, "but it won't work here. You've got to personalize it."

So Davies tried again. He wrote: "For years Philadelphians have been complaining about the wage tax. Now Mayor Goode wants to tax their unearned income." Again, he showed it to his editor, who this time rewrote it himself: "Mayor Goode has his eye on the interest from your savings account to balance the city budget. And the earnings from your money market fund. And the dividends from your stocks. And the profit you make when you sell your house. He even wants to get his hands on your winnings from the crap tables in Atlantic City, if you're so lucky."

The "pumping up" was something Davies sometimes had a problem with. To make it hard-hitting, he thought, you may have to make it unfair. The new lead had been technically accurate, he knew. But it had taken the complicated budget situation and simplified it, making it sound as if the problem was that Wilson Goode had his greedy eye on your pocketbook. Davies recognized that when a newspaper must sell itself each day as an impulse buy on the newsstand, that kind of writing was necessary, just as serial murders were always going to make page one and push out city budget stories. But he didn't have to like it.

FROM **THE MEDIA AND THE MAYOR'S RACE: THE FAILURE OF URBAN POLITICAL REPORTING**, BY PHYLLIS KANISS. INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS. 400 PP. \$39.95.

THE SPIRIT OF '87

Considering the length of the Constitution — more than five thousand words — the cost of hand-setting, the scarcity of paper, and the small size of newspapers at the time, to provide readers so promptly with the full text of so technical a document would demonstrate an impressive public spirit. Of about eighty newspapers publishing in the colonies at the time, by October 6 — only twenty days after the convention had adjourned — at least fifty-five had printed the full text. By the end of October the participating newspapers numbered some seventy-five. Even before Delaware, the first state, met in its ratifying convention on December 3, 1787, the number of separate printings of the Constitution in newspapers or other formats came to more than one hundred and fifty. . . .

Unlike a unique [handwritten] document, to which access could be controlled, printed copies spread with the wind. No one could be sure who had read what, or when, or what any reader had found in it for himself. The multiplying copies of the *printed* proposed Constitution were symbols of an opening society in which eventually all would have a right to know and judge the public business.

FROM **CLEOPATRA'S NOSE: ESSAYS ON THE UNEXPECTED**, BY DANIEL J. BOORSTIN. RANDOM HOUSE. 210 PP. \$23.

WHAT WALTER HATH WROUGHT



It was accepted that he was "the country's best-known and most widely read journalist as well as among its most influential," as *The New York Times* eulogized him in a front-page obituary. It was accepted that he had made the journalistic discovery, in Leonard Lyons's words, that "people were interested in people" and that he was credited consequently with the rise of a more lively, personal, and personality-oriented media. It was Walter Winchell who rewrote the rules for what was

permissible in a major daily newspaper; it was Walter Winchell who first created a demand for juicy tidbits about celebrities and then spent more than forty years attempting to satisfy it. . . .

But that was precisely the problem and the cultural tragedy. If Winchell was responsible for having enlivened journalism, he was also responsible in the eyes of many for having debased it. Once loosed, gossip refused to confine itself to columns. Once loosed, it danced all over the paper, sometimes seizing headlines, sometimes spawning whole publications and television programs, sometimes, and more insidiously, infecting reportage of so-called straight news by emphasizing voice and personalities at the expense of objectivity and duller facts. . . .

Long after the gossip column itself had yielded to other, larger and more pervasive vehicles of celebrity, this legacy remained. We would believe in our entitlement to know everything about our public figures. We would believe that fame is an exalted state but suspect that the famous always have something to hide. Above all, we would believe in a culture of gossip and celebrity where entertainment takes primacy over every other value. We would believe long after Walter Winchell, the man who had helped start it all, had been forgotten, another name on the ash heap of celebrity.

FROM **WINCHELL: GOSSIP, POWER AND THE CULTURE OF CELEBRITY**, BY NEAL GABLER. ALFRED A. KNOPF. 681 PP. \$30.

ON GETTING RESPECT

At this point in our history the best qualification for high office may well be a refusal to cooperate with the media's program of self-aggrandizement. A candidate with the courage to abstain from "debates" organized by the media would automatically distinguish himself from the others and command a good deal of public respect. Candidates should insist on directly debating each other instead of responding to questions put to them by commentators and pundits. Their passivity and subservience lower them in the eyes of the voters. They need to recover their self-respect

by challenging the media's status as arbiters of public discussion. A refusal to play by the media's rules would make people aware of the vast, illegitimate influence the mass media have come to exercise in American politics. It would also provide the one index of character that voters could recognize and applaud.

FROM **THE REVOLT OF THE ELITES AND THE BETRAYAL OF DEMOCRACY**, BY CHRISTOPHER LASCH. W.W. NORTON & COMPANY. 276 PP. \$22.

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MEDIA COVERAGE OF HEALTH CARE REFORM

A FINAL REPORT

A CONTENT ANALYSIS

The Kaiser Health Care Media Monitoring Report: A Joint Project for the Kaiser Family Foundation, Times Mirror Center for The People and The Press, and *Columbia Journalism Review*

Research and analysis by the Times Mirror Center in association with the Kaiser Family Foundation and *Columbia Journalism Review*

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HEALTH CARE REFORM: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRESS COVERAGE

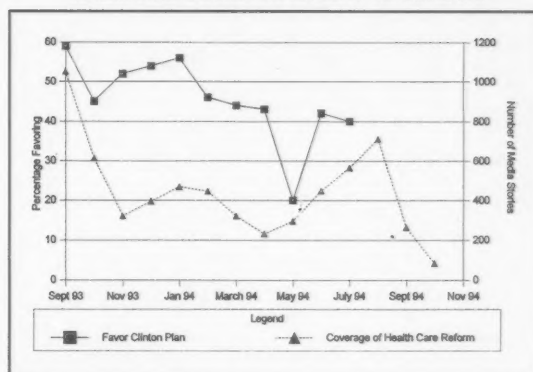
Health Care Reform was resurrected briefly as a major story in the American print and broadcast media from July through August 1994, as Congressional consideration of the issue came to a head. The amount of coverage rivalled the record levels of space and time devoted to the subject a year earlier when President Clinton unveiled his reform proposal. But coverage plummeted as reform began its death throes in September after Congress recessed without voting on the issue and Democrats admitted health care was dead for the session at least. The issue was virtually invisible in the mid-term election campaign, both on the political stumps and in the media.

During the third and final period of the Times Mirror content analysis of media coverage of the health care issue — five and a half months from July through mid-November 1994 — the stories increasingly followed trends that were identified from the outset of this work a year earlier. Most striking was that the politics of reform dominated in the coverage, while stories about the potential impact of reform on individuals and their families got ever-decreasing attention. Coverage also was concentrated increasingly on Congress rather than the White House, and on individual Congressmen rather than the President or Hillary Rodham Clinton, as alternative reform measures were introduced, debated, and ultimately discarded.

Public support for health care reform fell off gradually but steadily from its high water mark of 59% in favor (33% opposed) after the Clinton plan was presented. It dropped to 40% in favor (56% opposed) in mid-1994, despite the dramatic rise in coverage at the time of the Congressional debate. Gallup polls show that majority support turned to majority opposition between January and February 1994, following Clinton's State of the Union address. There was little correlation between the amount of coverage of the reform issue and support for the Clinton plan — coverage rose sharply as support eroded noticeably — reflecting the fact that most of the

coverage dealt with alternative proposals that implicitly rejected the Clinton formula.

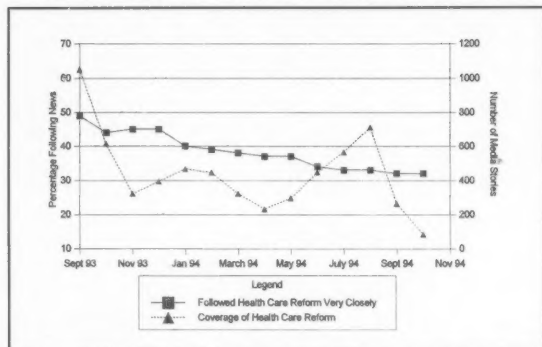
HEALTH CARE REFORM: FAVORABILITY VS. COVERAGE



PUBLIC REMAINS ATTENTIVE

But while support decreased over the year by about one-third, that level was nonetheless substantial. Moreover, close attention continued to be given to news about the issue by the public. This attentiveness decreases in parallel with support for the Clinton plan but was seemingly unrelated to the amount of media coverage to the issue. Some 32% of the public said it was following news reports about reform "very closely" in September and October when coverage had taken a dive into its post-mortem stage. The issue thus appeared to remain alive into the campaign season even if it was not politically viable in the strategy of Democratic candidates. Despite the threats and promises a year earlier by voters to punish or reward their Congressional candidates according to their position on the issue, less than 1% of more than 2,000 stories analyzed in the almost half year leading up to the election linked any politician's electoral prospects to the outcome of the health care reform debate.

HEALTH CARE REFORM: FOLLOWED CLOSELY VS. COVERAGE



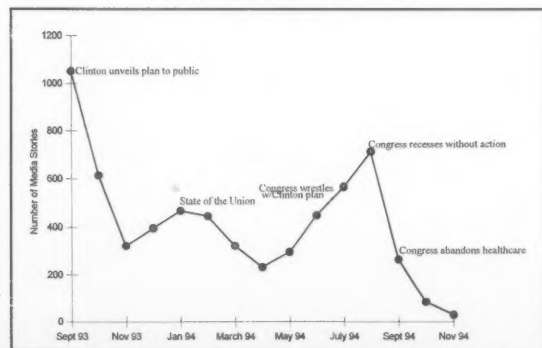
At the same time, however, the public's knowledge about key aspects of the reform package, such as whether it promised health care for all Americans, was decreasing over the course of the entire study period as coverage decreased and public dissatisfaction with that coverage rose. In an August 1994 Harris poll, only 32% of the public rated the media as excellent or good (5% said excellent) on health care coverage, down markedly from a year earlier when 44% said the coverage was excellent or good (7% said excellent) in a September 1993 PSRA/Harvard poll.

For the American press, health care reform was a challenging story with both social and political dimensions. It chose to concentrate on the political aspects, which was understandable but also the easier road to travel. The proposal had to become law before it would have any effect, so political infighting, counter proposals, and lobbying activities were necessarily important aspects of the issue. But stories that highlight conflict also attract wider audiences than those which seek to explain the intricacies of financing and providing health care to Americans (who, except for South Africans, are the only citizens of a western Democracy without universal coverage). Judging by the public's response, however, the media flunked the job.

RANGE OF STUDY

This report both summarizes the third and final phase of the content analysis study of media coverage and provides a summation of the entire effort which was conducted by the Times Mirror Center, under the sponsorship of the Kaiser Family Foundation in conjunction with the *Columbia Journalism Review*. Previous reports covered September through November, 1993 (Period I), and January 15 through May 31, 1994 (Period II). The last period extended five and a half months, from June 1 through November 13, 1994 (Period III).

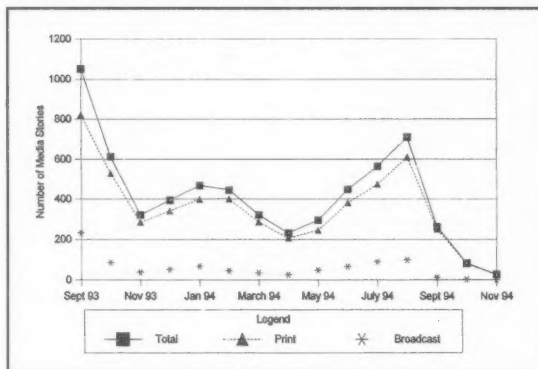
MEDIA COVERAGE AT KEY TIMES



Data was compiled by reviewing and coding stories that appeared in national and regional newspapers and national news broadcasts. During the first period, 1,987 stories were coded; during the second period, 1,529 stories; and during the final period, 2,084 stories. In addition to the total number of stories published and broadcast during the period, the stories were categorized according to straight news, backgrounders, interviews, editorials, and commentary or "op-ed" pieces. Excluded were broadcast panel discussions and print letters-to-the-editor.

In the final period, stories on health care reform were plentiful initially, averaging about 500 a month in June and July and topping 700 in August. Coverage plunged by more than half in September, by another two-thirds in October, and averaged merely one a day for the first half of November. The print media stayed with the health care story much longer than television. In September, out of 263 total print and broadcast pieces on the issue, television provided less than 5% (12 pieces); in October, only 3 of 83 total pieces were on broadcast media; and in the first half of November, when total coverage on health care dropped to merely one-a-day, broadcast coverage disappeared; no stories on the issue were broadcast.

HEALTH CARE REFORM COVERAGE: TOTAL VS. PRINT VS. BROADCAST



THE CLINTONS AND THEIR PLAN

Not surprisingly, the focus was on Capitol Hill during the final period of analysis. Health care news was being made at least three times more often by Congressional figures than Administration officials. President Clinton remained the top individual news maker over the course of the entire period studied, but specific members of Congress challenged and sometimes surpassed him at various points, particularly at the height of Congressional activity on the issue. Among these were two Democrats, Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan of New York and Sen. George Mitchell of Maine, and Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kansas), the minority leader.

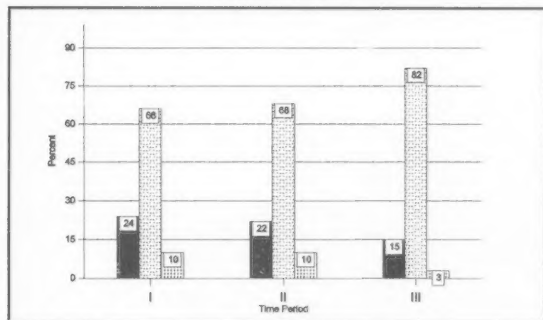
Hillary Rodham Clinton's coverage remained virtually unchanged throughout the second and third periods, although it was half of the attention she enjoyed in the initial (Fall 1993) period when she was most actively campaigning for the reform proposal. She was, however, featured prominently in the obituaries and post-mortems on the Clinton plan, at times eclipsing all other newsmakers — her husband and the various senators — combined.

Along with the decline in stories of reform featuring the Clintons, the coverage became less favorable toward them in the final period studied. Only 3% of the stories about the President had a positive spin, down from 10% in each of the previous periods. Mrs. Clinton's favorable coverage dropped even more precipitously: from 31%

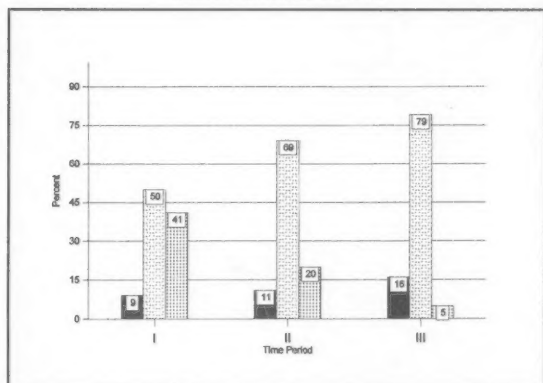
positive in the first period, through 17% in the second period (early 1994), to only 4% in the last period. Negative coverage of President Clinton also dropped over the course of the study, from 22% in both of the earlier periods to 18% at the end. But Hillary Clinton's negative coverage increased by about half, to 13% of stories with negative spin in the final period. Overall, however, the stories about both Clinton's were remarkably balanced — a story was judged in balance or neutral when fewer than twice the comments, quotes, citations, or innuendoes were negative vs. positive or vice versa — over the course of the study: over 60% in the first period, rising through the second period to more than 80% in the final period.

BALANCE IN COVERAGE — PRINT

PRESIDENT CLINTON

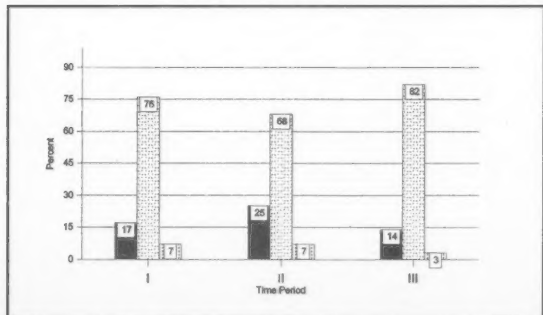


HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

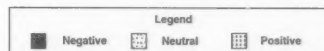
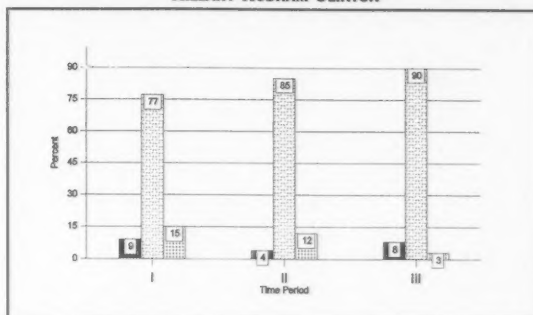


BALANCE IN COVERAGE — BROADCAST

PRESIDENT CLINTON



HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON



Somewhat less balance was found in stories in the third period about prospects for passage of some kind of health care reform plan. Nonetheless, it was considerable, with 65% of pieces judged neutral. By this time, the media had largely given up on the Clinton plan for reform, and more than half of the stories about prospects for reform legislation dealt with alternatives to his proposal. The domination of the health care story by politics was most apparent in this period: fully 62% of all pieces in all the media gave odds for or against enactment of some reform law. More than half of them handicapped alternative plans, of which 37% were neutral, 11% pessimistic, and 7% optimistic. Relatively little attention had been given to alternative plans in the earlier two periods under study, with almost all the focus on Clinton's proposal. In late 1993, 66% of all stories were neutral about prospects for Clinton's plan, with 16% pessimistic and 9% optimistic. In the second period, in early 1994, neutrality dropped to 47%, pessimism rose to 21% and optimism slid to 6%. In the final period, only one in three stories (32%) assessed prospects for the Clinton plan; with 20% neutral, 10% pessimistic about passage, and 2% optimistic.

DIFFERENCES IN THE MEDIA

For all media, the monthly averages of total number of stories were highest in Period I, dipped substantially in Period II, and rebounded in Period III before the final decline. Television news never accounted for more than 16% of the total coverage, but was usually above 10% until the last three months of the study when the issue largely disappeared. National papers ran about twice as many stories on the issues as the regional papers studied. Of the national papers, most stories were carried by *The Washington Post* (804) and *The New York Times* (743), followed by *USA Today* (575), the *Los Angeles Times* (552), and *The Wall Street Journal* (444). Less differences appeared in the television news, which was led by CNN (169 pieces) and ABC (166), then CBS (149), NBC (138), and MacNeil/Lehrer (126). The newsmagazines, finally, did not return to the story significantly in the final period of study; and while initially each had cover-related major stories about health care reform, they dealt with the death of the reform effort only in passing. *Time*, in particular, ran a 75-word obituary in its "Chronicle" section, which was well below the 100-word minimum for inclusion in this study. Among other differences found by the study was that broadcast news became more political in time, compared to the print medium. In the initial period, about three in ten stories in both media dealt with the impact on politics of the health care issue, but in the second and third periods under review, politics weighed much more heavily in broadcast than in print pieces: 78% and 85% for broadcast in the respective periods, compared to 59% and 70% for print. Broadcast also tended, over time, to feature a newsmaker to tell the story more than print, particularly in the final period of the study. Almost two-thirds (63%) of broadcast pieces in Period III focused on news made by Congress, compared to less than half (48%) of print stories.

METHODOLOGY

The following 17 news outlets were monitored for the period of June 1, 1994 through November 13, 1994.

National newspapers were selected on the basis of circulation, distribution, size of Washington D.C. bureau, and audience. Geographic distribution and diversity of parent corporation were factors in regional selections.

Broadcast news was taped in Washington, D.C., according to published television timetables. Thus, this study was subject to preemption by local affiliates, a common occurrence on weekends devoted to college and professional sports.

NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS The *Los Angeles Times* (daily), *The New York Times* (daily), *The Wall Street Journal* (M-F), *The Washington Post* (daily), *USA Today* (M-F)

REGIONAL NEWSPAPERS *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Des Moines Register*, *The Miami Herald*, *The Seattle Times* (all dailies)

NEWSWEEKLIES (beginning with issues dated after May 31, 1994) *Newsweek*, *Time*, *U.S. News & World Report*

BROADCAST NEWS ABC World News Tonight, CBS Evening News, CNN Evening Prime, NBC Nightly News (all daily broadcasts), PBS MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour (M-F broadcast)

SCREENING AND INCLUSION

All newspapers, magazines, and broadcasts were reviewed in their entirety. If one-third, or more, of a news story was related to health care reform, it was included in this study, with some exceptions:

- 1) For print, only articles of 100 words or longer were studied;
- 2) For broadcast, all references were coded, but anchor lead-ins of less than 35 seconds were considered part of the upcoming report unless it was clear that the lead-in was intended to stand alone;
- 3) For broadcast, only the *produced* pieces, reported by a correspondent, were included; discussions among experts and/or participants, moderated by an anchor or correspondent, were not.

The one-third rule for inclusion is accepted practice in content analysis. The exceptions noted insure that those stories that are too brief to be meaningful, or are not truly the product of a news organization, are not part of the final analysis.

INTERCODER RELIABILITY

Intercoder reliability measures the extent to which coders, operating autonomously, code or classify the same story the same way. Intercoder reliability tests were performed throughout this study, and no significant differences were found to exist on a recurring basis.

COMPARATIVE RESULTS

HEALTH CARE REFORM NEWS CONTENT ANALYSIS

- I. September 1-November 30, 1993 N=1,987 News Stories
II. January 15-May 31, 1994 N=1,529 News Stories
III. June 1-November 13, 1994 N=2,084 News Stories

1. NEWS SOURCE Designates the newspaper, magazine, or broadcast in which the story appeared. *El Diario* and *Amsterdam News* were part of the analysis for Period I only. Figures represent the total number of stories for each entry.

PRINT

NATIONAL	I	II	III
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	233	134	185
<i>The New York Times</i>	228	163	352
<i>The Wall Street Journal</i>	163	147	134
<i>The Washington Post</i>	270	258	276
<i>USA Today</i>	194	170	211

REGIONAL	I	II	III
<i>The Dallas Morning News</i>	124	122	179
<i>The Des Moines Register</i>	120	109	142
<i>The Miami Herald</i>	124	106	148
<i>The Seattle Times</i>	107	81	125
<i>El Diario</i>	14	—	—
<i>Amsterdam News</i>	—	—	—

NEWSWEEKLIES	I	II	III
<i>Newsweek</i>	26	16	25
<i>Time</i>	15	10	18
<i>U.S. News & World Report</i>	16	23	18

BROADCAST For Period I only, one morning show was monitored per week on a rotating basis.

EVENING NEWS	I	II	III
ABC World News Tonight	51	39	76
CBS Evening News	74	37	38
CNN Prime News	70	46	53
NBC Nightly News	60	32	46
PBS MacNeil/Lehrer	34	34	58

MORNING SHOWS	I	II	III
ABC Good Morning America	36	—	—
CBS Morning Show	22	—	—
NBC Today Show	—	—	—
NPR Morning Edition	6	—	—

2. DATE Designates the month and year of publication or broadcast. Figures represent the total number of stories for each entry.

	I	II	III
I. September 1993	1051	820	231
October 1993	614	529	85
November 1993	322	285	37
II. January 15-31, 1994	234	200	34
February 1994	446	401	45
March 1994	322	287	35
April 1994	232	207	25
May 1994	295	246	49
III. June 1994	448	382	66
July 1994	565	475	90
August 1994	711	611	100
September 1994	263	251	12
October 1994	83	80	3
November 1-13, 1994	14	14	—

3. POSITION Designates the placement of the story within the publication or newscast. Figures are percentages.

NEWSPAPERS	I	II	III
Page One Story	16	11	16
National/International Section	46	53	52
Editorial Pages/Section	18	23	21
Business Section	10	5	2
Metro/Local/Regional Section	4	5	3
Style/Life Section	1	1	*
Special Section (Magazine, Science, Health, etc.)	5	2	6
Other	*	*	*
	100%	100%	100%

MAGAZINES	I	II	III
Cover Associated Story	40	—	—
Outside line	14	8	7
No cover appearance	46	92	93
	100%	100%	100%

BROADCASTS	I	II	III
First story	11	10	11
Second story	10	11	15
Third story	10	13	8
Fourth story	10	14	13
Story 5 to 9	28	38	39
Story 10 to 14	17	13	13
Story 15 to 19	7	1	1
Story 20 to 24	3	*	*
Story 25 to 29	2	*	*
Story 30 or later	2	*	*
	100%	100%	100%

4. STORY LENGTH Designates story length as measured by number of words or by number of minutes or seconds in each story. Figures are percentages.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES	I	II	III
Less than 300	9	14	10
300-499	18	22	19
500-999	45	42	43
1,000-1,499	20	17	20
1,500-2,499	7	5	7
2,500 or more	1	*	1
	100%	100%	100%

BROADCASTS	I	II	III
Less than 30 seconds	6	2	—
:30-:59	5	11	6
1:00-1:29	9	11	11
1:30-1:59	9	21	10
2:00-2:29	36	34	43
2:30-2:59	10	7	7
3:00-3:59	10	6	10
4:00-4:59	5	2	5
5:00 and over	10	6	8
	100%	100%	100%

5. WIRE SERVICE Designates whether the story was filed by a staff reporter, drawn from wire services, or was a Commentary/Op-ed piece written by a non-staff/guest columnist or a story without a byline. Figures are percentages.

NEWSPAPERS ONLY	I	II	III
Staff Writer	70	67	68
Associated Press	5	6	5
Chicago Tribune Service	*	*	*
Gannett	*	*	*
Knight-Ridder	2	1	1
L.A. Times Wire Service	1	2	3
N.Y. Times Wire Service	1	1	2
Reuters	*	*	1
Washington Post Service	2	2	2
Commentary/Op-ed: Non-staff	13	17	14
Other wire service	3	3	3
Don't know/can't tell	3	1	1
	100%	100%	100%

6. DATELINE Designates location from which story was filed. Figures are percentages. T=total, P=print, and B=broadcast.

	I	II	III
	T	T	T P B
Washington, D.C.	66	68	74 72 85
New York City	8	6	6 7 1
Other U.S./International	21	25	20 21 14
Unknown	5	1	* * *
	100%	100%	100% 100% 100%

7. STORY TYPE Figures are percentages. Categorizes the story as:

	I	II	III
	T	T	T P B
Lengthy interview	3	*	* * *
News	27	43	39 36 61
Backgrounder	50	34	34 34 39
Commentary/Op-ed	12	14	14 16 *
Editorial	4	7	8 9 *
Informational Sidebar	4	2	5 5 *
	100%	100%	100% 100% 100%

8. USE OF GRAPHICS (print only) Identifies the use of graphics within each story. Figures are percentages.

	I	II	III
Graphics used	14	7	9
Graphics not used	86	93	91
	100%	100%	100%

9. LEVEL OF IMPACT — FOCUS OF STORY Identifies the manner in which the story examines the impact of health care reform. Figures are percentages.

IMPACT ON:	I	II	III
	T	T	T P B
Individuals and families	17	8	4 4 3
Health care profession	6	2	1 1 1
Overall health care system	21	16	17 19 6
Politics	31	62	72 70 85
The economy	12	8	4 4 4
The nation (non-political)	13	4	2 2 1
	100%	100%	100% 100% 100%

10. RECURRING STORY LEADS Designates the specific story lead or "big story," measuring ad hoc issues and events of major proportion. Figures are percentages.

I. SEPTEMBER 1-NOVEMBER 30, 1993	T	P	B
Discussion/Analysis of actual Clinton Plan	23	26	9
Pre-release analysis of Clinton Plan	11	11	13
Presenting the Clinton Plan/Public Outreach	10	10	12
Clinton speech to Congress/Nation	6	5	10
Hillary testifies before Congress	4	3	7
Clinton bill sent to Congress	3	2	5
Leak of Clinton's reform plan	2	2	4
Plans other than Clinton's	2	2	2
Clinton's attack insurance industry ads	2	1	3
Republicans propose alternative plan	1	1	2
Republican response to plan/Speech	1	1	1
Delay in Clinton's delivery to Congress	1	1	2
Complexity of reform issue	1	1	—
Abortion and reform package	1	1	*
State/Local reforms to-date	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*
Not a big story	32	33	30
	100%	100%	100%

II. JANUARY 15-MAY 31, 1994	T	P	B
Presenting the Clinton Plan/Public Outreach	17	15	27
Discussion/Analysis of Clinton Plan	10	11	4
Clinton's State of the Union Address	5	5	8
House/Senate Committee Action/Votes	5	5	1
Alternatives to Clinton Plan	4	4	3
State/Local Reforms to-date	3	3	1
Hill Hearings RE: Health Care Reform	3	3	6
Business Groups Anti-Clinton Plan	3	3	5
Cooper Plan in Spotlight	3	3	2
Harry & Louise Saga Continues	3	2	5
Republican Response to State of the Union Speech	2	2	1
Kennedy Senate Initiatives Re: Health Care Reform	2	2	1
Rostenkowski's Rush to Enact Reform	1	1	2
Complexity of Reform Issue	1	1	—
Abortion and Health Care Reform	*	*	*
George Mitchell's Senate Initiatives Re: Reform	*	*	*
Other	2	3	9
Not a Big Story	36	38	27
	100%	100%	100%

III. JUNE 1-NOVEMBER 13, 1994

	T	P	B
House/Senate Floor Action	7	6	14
Presenting the Clinton Plan/Public Outreach	6	5	11
Congressional Committee Action	6	5	7
Health Care Reform - Dead or Alive?	5	4	7
State/Local Reforms to-date	4	5	2
Bipartisan Congressional Coalition	4	4	4
George Mitchell Senate Initiatives re:Health Care Reform	4	3	7
Post-Mortems on Health Care Reform	3	3	1
Clinton backtracks re: Universal Coverage	3	2	4
Health Care Reform & Special Interest Advertising	2	2	3
Proposed options/alternative plans	2	2	2
Congressional August recess over			
— Health Care Reform Debate returns	2	2	1
House Democrats/Gephardt Last-Ditch Bill	2	2	1
1995 — What Happens to HCR?	2	2	—
Democrats Say: Let's Start Over in '95	1	1	2
Moynihan — Saviour of Health Care Reform	1	1	2
Catholics/Abortion/Health Care Reform	1	1	1
August Delay in Congressional Vote	1	1	—
Discussion/Analysis of Actual Clinton Plan	1	1	2
Congressional Floor Action	1	1	2
Other	5	8	8
Not a Big Story	37	39	19
	100%	100%	100%

11. PRINCIPAL NEWS SUBJECT Identifies the principal news subject in each story. Figures are percentages.

	I	II	III	T	P	B
GENERAL CATEGORIES	T	T	T	P	B	
Cost of Proposal	3	5	1	1	1	
Government's role	6	6	2	2	2	
Who's covered	7	6	8	8	11	
What's covered	8	5	5	5	4	
Who pays	11	8	7	8	5	
Reform: approaches and features	16	13	12	12	10	
Impact on quality	1	1	1	1	—	
Restrictions on choice	1	1	*	*	*	
Portability	*	*	*	*	*	
Primary practice emphasis	3	1	2	2	1	
Economic factors	6	4	2	2	1	
Impact on existing programs	3	1	1	1	—	
Politics of health care reform	28	46	57	56	65	
Other/Miscellaneous	7	3	2	2	*	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

SPECIFIC TOPICS Figures represent the total number of stories for each entry.

	I	II	III	T	P	B
COST OF PROPOSAL	T	T	T	P	B	
Overall price tag	13	7	2	2	—	
Impact on federal budget deficit	7	24	1	1	—	
Cost of proposal/Other	41	39	21	18	3	
GOVERNMENT ROLE						
Price controls on fees/rates/etc.	18	17	6	6	—	
Set spending caps	12	3	—	—	—	
Established uniform benefits	3	1	—	—	—	
Set uniform standards for plans	1	2	—	—	—	
Certification of health plans	3	2	1	1	—	
Compiles individual citizen records	—	2	1	—	1	
Other	90	60	40	6	4	
WHO'S COVERED						
Timetable for coverage to take effect	8	1	6	5	1	
Percent of population covered	1	8	20	14	6	
Coverage of rural populations	4	6	1	1	—	
Coverage of current uninsured	24	9	11	10	1	
Coverage of disabled	1	6	1	1	—	
Opt-outs	—	1	—	—	—	
Coverage/Other	89	68	128	106	22	
WHAT'S COVERED						
Coverage of "ordinary & necessary" care	13	2	9	7	2	
Coverage of long-term care	15	5	7	7	—	
Coverage of mental health services	11	8	5	5	—	
Coverage of abortion	30	16	36	31	5	
Benefits for current uninsured	12	2	4	4	—	
Comprehensiveness/Other	75	38	41	38	3	

WHO PAYS

	I	II	III	T	P	B
Federal income tax	3	6	1	1	—	
Cigarette/Liquor tax	42	11	19	17	2	
Tax insurance benefits	1	2	2	2	—	
Value-added tax	—	2	—	—	—	
Tax on hospital windfalls	—	1	—	—	—	
Employer mandates	16	55	76	65	11	
"Fairness" of financing	7	2	—	—	—	
Consumer costs	18	1	—	—	—	
Paying for reform/Other	139	43	57	55	2	

REFORM — APPROACHES AND FEATURES

	I	II	III	T	P	B
HIPCs	9	8	—	—	—	
Health plans or provider networks	32	8	6	6	—	
Payment of doctors	1	1	—	—	—	
Medical malpractice	10	1	6	5	1	
Health security cards	1	—	—	—	—	
Continued role of insurance companies	15	5	7	7	—	
Administrative cost of running system	8	1	—	—	—	
Alternate approach to new system	29	79	153	130	23	
Regional Health Alliances	—	23	4	4	—	
Establishment of National Health Board	—	1	1	1	—	
Organization/Components and Other	211	78	62	60	2	

IMPACT ON QUALITY

	I	II	III	T	P	B
Present insured get same quality care	9	6	—	—	—	
Delays for appointment, office waits	1	—	—	—	—	
Quality of health care/Other	14	14	12	12	—	

RESTRICTIONS ON CHOICE

	I	II	III	T	P	B
Patient free to choose provider	18	7	3	2	1	
Doctors free to choose treatment	3	4	2	2	—	
Freedom of choice/Other	5	7	5	5	—	

PORTABILITY

	I	II	III	T	P	B
Coverage moves with individual	6	3	2	2	—	

PRIMARY PRACTICE EMPHASIS

	I	II	III	T	P	B
Shift doctors to family/primary care	12	3	5	5	—	
Reorganize medical practice/Other	40	15	29	27	2	

ECONOMIC FACTORS

	I	II	III	T	P	B
Reform's impact on jobs	17	5	—	—	—	
Reform's impact on small business	35	11	7	6	1	
Reform's impact on big business	—	7	2	2	—	
Economy and reform/Other	67	30	22	21	1	

IMPACT ON EXISTING PROGRAMS

	I	II	III	T	P	B
Medicare system/benefits	12	11	12	12	—	
Abolishing Medicaid	6	1	2	2	—	
Worker's compensation	3	—	1	1	—	
Auto-accident injuries	1	—	—	—	—	
Existing programs/Other	32	4	9	9	—	

POLITICS OF HEALTH CARE REFORM

	I	II	III	T	P	B
Role of Clinton Administration	67	84	128	97	31	
Health Care Reform Task Force	20	4	25	25	—	
HHS/Bureaucratic role	3	1	1	1	—	
Congressional role	100	197	554	458	96	
Special interest role	60	96	93	81	12	
State/Local role	17	21	44	42	2	
Federal/State/Local relationship	—	14	10	10	—	
Politics/Other	283	282	334	298	36	

OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS

	I	II	III	T	P	B
	131	46	47	47	—	

12. PRINCIPAL AND SECONDARY NEWS SUBJECT Identifies the prominent health care reform topics in each story. Figures are percentages.

	I	II	III	T	P	B
GENERAL CATEGORIES	T	T	T	P	B	
Cost of Proposal	5	6	2	2	2	
Government's role	10	8	5	5	3	
Who's covered	10	9	13	12	17	
What's covered	10	6	6	7	5	
Who pays	17	12	14	15	11	
Reform: approaches and features	23	20	20	20	16	
Impact on Quality	2	2	1	2	—	
Restrictions on Choice	2	2	1	1	1	
Portability	1	1	*	*	—	
Primary practice emphasis	4	1	2	2	2	

GENERAL CATEGORIES (CONT'D)	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Economic factors	8	5	2	2	1		
Impact on existing programs	5	2	2	2	—		
Politics of health care reform	36	55	66	65	78		

SPECIFIC TOPICS Figures represent the total number of stories for each entry.

COST OF PROPOSAL	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Overall price tag	18	13	3	3	—		
Impact on federal budget deficit	9	31	1	1	—		
Cost of proposal/Other	64	58	34	30	4		

GOVERNMENT ROLE	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Price controls on fees/rates/etc.	29	18	12	12	—		
Set spending caps	14	4	—	—	—		
Established uniform benefits	3	—	—	—	—		
Set uniform standards for plans	3	1	—	—	—		
Certification of health plans	3	—	—	—	—		
Assessment of new and existing technology	—	2	—	—	—		
Gov't compiles individual citizen records	—	2	1	—	1		
Government role/Other	146	95	89	82	7		

WHO'S COVERED	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Timetable for coverage to take effect	9	2	9	7	2		
Percent of population covered	2	9	28	21	7		
Coverage of rural populations	7	6	1	1	—		
Coverage of current uninsured	35	13	13	12	1		
Coverage of disabled	3	6	1	1	—		
Opt-outs	—	1	3	3	—		
Coverage/Other	134	104	215	178	37		

WHAT'S COVERED	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Coverage of "ordinary and necessary" care	20	2	12	10	2		
Coverage of long-term care	20	7	8	8	—		
Coverage of mental health services	13	9	5	5	—		
Coverage of abortion	32	17	44	37	7		
Benefits for current uninsured	17	3	4	4	—		
Comprehensiveness/Other	102	63	61	57	4		

WHO PAYS	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Federal income tax	3	8	1	1	—		
Cigarette/Liquor tax	48	14	24	20	4		
Tax insurance benefits	1	3	4	4	—		
Employer mandates	24	84	156	133	23		
"Fairness" of Financing	8	2	—	—	—		
Consumer costs	24	1	—	—	—		
Tax on hospital windfalls	—	1	—	—	—		
Value-added tax	—	2	—	—	—		
Paying for reform/Other	240	85	116	113	3		

REFORM — APPROACHES AND FEATURES	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
HIPCs	11	8	2	2	—		
Health plans or provider networks	48	13	6	6	—		
Payment of doctors	3	1	—	—	—		
Medical malpractice	10	1	6	5	1		
Health security cards	1	—	1	—	1		
Continued role of insurance companies	21	9	9	9	—		
Administrative cost of running system	12	3	—	—	—		
Alternate approach to new system	56	114	256	219	37		
Regional Health Alliances	—	31	6	5	1		
Establishment of National Health Board	—	3	7	7	—		
Organization/Components and Other	132	116	128	125	3		

IMPACT ON QUALITY	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Present insured get same quality care	16	7	1	1	—		
Delays for appointment, office waits	1	—	—	—	—		
Quality of health care/Other	29	21	26	26	—		

RESTRICTIONS ON CHOICE	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Patient free to choose provider	26	10	4	3	1		
Doctors free to choose treatment	4	6	3	2	1		
Freedom of choice/Other	17	11	9	9	—		

PORTABILITY	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Coverage moves with individual	13	5	5	5	—		
Portability/Other	—	2	—	—	—		

PRIMARY PRACTICE EMPHASIS	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Shift doctors to family/primary care	18	5	6	6	—		
Reorganize medical practice/Other	54	23	40	36	4		

ECONOMIC FACTORS	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Reform's impact on jobs	29	8	2	1	1		
Reform's impact on small business	52	15	11	10	1		
Reform's impact on big business	—	11	3	3	—		
Economy and reform/Other	94	48	31	30	1		

IMPACT ON EXISTING PROGRAMS	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Medicare system/benefits	25	16	18	18	—		
Abolishing Medicaid	8	2	4	4	—		
Worker's compensation	3	—	1	1	—		
Auto-accident injuries	1	—	—	—	—		
Existing programs/Other	51	9	16	16	—		

POLITICS OF HEALTH CARE REFORM	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Role of Clinton Administration	96	110	158	119	39		
Health Care Reform Task Force	27	4	27	26	1		
HHS/Bureaucratic role	3	1	1	1	—		
Congressional role	155	277	699	572	127		
Special interest role	89	129	123	107	16		
State/Local role	23	28	52	48	4		
Federal/State/Local Relationship	—	20	12	12	—		
Politics/Other	415	395	401	353	48		

13. PRINCIPAL NEWSMAKER Designates the principal newsmaker or spokesperson, if any, portrayed in each story. Figures are percentages.

CATEGORICAL NEWSMAKERS	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Clinton Administration	51	29	17	16	20		
Congress	9	32	50	48	63		
Experts (non-government)	2	1	1	1	—		
Government Experts (not admin. reps.)	*	3	1	1	*		
Officers/Spokesperson —							
Special Interest Groups	7	8	5	6	3		
State/Local officials	1	5	3	4	1		
Judiciary	*	*	*	*	—		
Other	30	22	23	24	13		
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		

INDIVIDUAL NEWSMAKERS

GOVERNMENT	I		II		III		
	T	T	T	P	B		
Bill Clinton	24	18	8	8	10		
Hillary Clinton	8	3	2	2	4		
Dan Rostenkowski	*	3	*	*	—		
Jim Cooper	*	2	*	*	—		
Pete Stark	*	2	*	*	—		
Robert Reischauer	*	2	*	*	—		
Robert Dole	*	2	2	2	2		
Ted Kennedy	*	1	1	*	1		
George Mitchell	*	1	6	5	7		
Jim McDermott	*	*	*	*	—		
Daniel Moynihan	*	*	2	2	3		
Richard Gephardt	*	*	1	1	2		
Jay Rockefeller	*	*	*	*	*		
John Chafee	*	*	1	1	1		
Harold Ickes	*	*	—	—	—		
Donna Shalala	1	*	*	*	*		
Fred Grandy	*	*	—	—	—		
Al Gore	*	*	*	*	—		
John Kerry	*	*	—	—	—		
Joycelyn Elders	*	*	*	*	*		
Tom Foley	*	*	1	1	—		
Ira Magaziner	1	*	*	*	—		
Phil Gramm	—	—	*	*	—		

The Lower case

Smithsonian may cancel bombing of Japan exhibit

The Times (Shreveport, La.) 1/26/95

British cook Fanny Cradock

The Arizona Republic 1/2/95

Experts Increase Probability of a Big Quake in California

The New York Times 1/21/95



MATT MANTON/OF THE NORTHWESTERN
GERALD OELERICH IS FRAMED
by Winnebago County District Attorney Joseph Paulus at Wednesday's hearing.

Oshkosh (Wis.) Northwestern 11/17/94

Woman relishes passing out as holiday approaches

The Pantagraph (Bloomington, Ill.) 11/30/94

City council takes up masturbation

Cambridge (Mass.) Chronicle 12/22/94

2 Ships Collide in Manila Bay; Ferry Carrying Over 500 Sinks

The New York Times 12/2/94

► **Correction:** A story on Sally Ann Carey Thursday incorrectly stated that the family of a missing girl came to her for a psychic consultation. Two friends of the girl came to that session, and later Carey talked with the girl's mother. Also, Carey worked for Rutland Mental Health, not the Rutland Regional Medical Center. She taught swimming, not singing, adopted one child, not two, and at times contacts healing guides, not healing gods.

Rutland (Ver.) Daily Herald 12/17/94

8 American men left

Times-News (Hendersonville, N.C.) 1/22/95

Man executed after long speech

The Boston Globe 12/12/94

Doctors offer sniper reward

The Daily Courier (Kelowna, B.C.) 12/10/94

Lorton residents prefer prison to development

Mount Vernon Gazette (Alexandria, Va.) 12/22/94

Lawyer Alice Rickel, whose practice is limited to family law, was appointed to the board of directors of the Center for the Preservation of Domestic Violence.

The Plain Dealer (Cleveland) 2/2/95

INDIVIDUAL NEWSMAKERS (CONT'D)	I	II	III		
Non-Government	T	T	T	P	B
Lane Kirkland (AFL-CIO)	*	*	—	—	—
Richard Davidson (Am. Hospital Assn.)	*	*	—	—	—
Henry Aaron (Brookings)	*	*	—	—	—
Steven Schroeder (R.W. Johnson Foundation)	*	*	—	—	—
Helen Alvare (Nat'l Conference of Catholic Bishops)	*	*	*	*	—
Michael Bromberg (Fed. Am. Health Syst.)	*	*	—	—	—
Doug Johnson (Nat'l. Right to Life)	*	*	—	—	—

14. ISSUE DEBATE BALANCE LEVEL* Designates the extent to which the story is balanced when a policy issue debate is central to the piece. Figures are percentages.

Balanced	79	80	86	85	92
Not balanced or one-sided	21	20	14	15	8
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

15. PRESIDENT CLINTON'S PROPOSAL* Designates whether the story is mainly critical or mainly positive about President Clinton, his White House/Administration, or family (excluding Hillary Rodham Clinton). Figures are percentages.

CLINTON CRITICAL	22	22	15	15	14
Policy matters	18	16	10	10	11
Personal qualities	*	*	1	1	—
Political ineptitude	4	6	4	4	3
CLINTON NEUTRAL	68	68	82	82	82
CLINTON POSITIVE	10	10	3	3	4
Political acumen	4	3	1	1	—
Personal qualities	*	*	*	—	2
Policy matters	6	7	2	2	2

16. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON'S PORTRAYAL* Designates whether the story is mainly critical or mainly positive about Hillary Rodham Clinton, or her staff, including the Health Care Reform Task Force. Figures are percentages.

HILLARY CRITICAL	8	9	13	16	8
Policy matters	7	4	5	6	2
Personal qualities	*	1	4	5	3
Political ineptitude	1	4	4	5	3
HILLARY NEUTRAL	61	74	83	79	90
HILLARY POSITIVE	31	17	4	5	2
Political acumen	21	2	2	4	—
Personal qualities	9	10	1	1	—
Policy matters	1	5	1	—	2

17. PORTRAYAL OF HEALTH CARE REFORM'S PROSPECTS* An evaluation of the story's portrayal of the likelihood of successful implementation of a health care reform plan. Figures are percentages.

CLINTON PLAN					
Optimistic spin	9	6	2	3	1
Neutral spin	66	47	19	20	18
Pessimistic spin	16	21	10	10	12

APPENDIX: HOW WE CODED HEALTH CARE REFORM NEWS
The following provides further coding information for selected variables within this report.

STORY TYPE Coders identify how the journalist presented the story. Breaking events, after-the-fact accounts, and coverage of sched-

uled events are classified as **NEWS**; researched or anecdotal stories are classified as **BACKGROUNDERS**; opinion, commentary, and editorial pieces are classified as **COMMENTARY/OP-ED**.

SOURCE OF NEWS STORY Coders look for the story's origination point. **NEWS LEAKS** would require that an official document had been revealed to the reporter; **COVERAGE OF OPINIONS STATEMENTS OR SPECULATION FROM GOVERNMENT OR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS** designates those stories generated by government or Clinton Administration sources; the same criteria was applied to **NON-GOV-ERNMENT SOURCES**, such as health care experts or industry spokesperson; coverage of speeches, press conferences, or breaking events were coded as **NEWS EVENT**; media-generated pieces were coded as **NEWS ANALYSIS**, **INVESTIGATIVE-RESEARCHED**; and **other** encompasses the remaining stories, including commentary, opinion and editorials.

LEVEL OF IMPACT — FOCUS OF STORY If the story examines the impact of health care reform on individuals, patients or their families, it is coded for **PEOPLE**; if it examines the impact on doctors, nurses, et al, it is coded for **HEALTH CARE PROFESSION AND PROFESSIONALS**; for impact on hospitals, insurance companies, bureaucracies, pharmaceutical companies, or other components of the **OVER-ALL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**, it is coded as such; **POLITICS** and **ECONOM-ICS** stories each have separate impact codes; and those few stories that fall in multiple impact areas are coded as **OTHER**.

RECURRING STORY LEADS Coders evaluate each story looking for recurrent themes/leads. Typically, thematic trends in press coverage have a finite life.

PRINCIPAL NEWS SUBJECT Coders identify the most prominent health care reform topic examined in each story. Coding rules require that 1/3 or more of a story be about said topic in order to qualify as the **PRINCIPAL NEWS SUBJECT**.

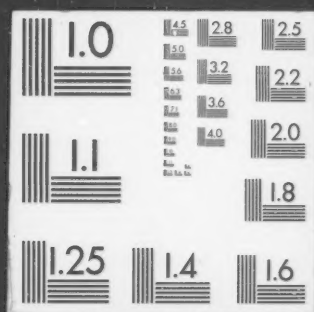
SECONDARY NEWS SUBJECT Coders identify the second most prominent health care reform topic, if any, examined in each story. Coding rules require 1/4 of the story be about said topic, and that there can only be a **SECONDARY NEWS SUBJECT** when the coder has first identified a **PRINCIPAL NEWS SUBJECT** within the story.

PRINCIPAL NEWSMAKER Coders identify the most prominently featured newsmaker, if any, in each story. Coding rules require that 1/2 or more of a story be focused on that newsmaker in order to qualify as the **PRINCIPAL NEWSMAKER**.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S PORTRAYAL AND HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON'S PORTRAYAL These "spin" variables require coding when 1/3 or more of a story is about the designated Clinton. Coders determine "spin" by quantifying and evaluating the positive and negative comments, interpretations, and innuendos offered by the journalist or presented as quotes from other sources. If the ratio is 2:1 negative or more, the story is coded as negative; if the ratio is 2:1 positive, it is coded as positive. Those stories that have a positive:negative ratio of less than 2:1 are considered neutral or ambiguous.

PORTRAYAL OF HEALTH CARE REFORM'S PROSPECTS For each story that discusses the likelihood of health care reform passage, coders evaluate for "spin" by quantifying and evaluating the positive and negative comments, interpretations, and innuendos offered by the journalist or presented as quotes from other sources. The 2:1 rule previously described is used to determine "spin."

ISSUE DEBATE BALANCE When an examination of a specific policy issue is central to the story, it is analyzed for **ISSUE DEBATE BALANCE**. Coders identify the policy issue (not a political issue) and evaluate the extent to which the story is fair to all sides. The previously described 2:1 rule determines balance; if a reporter quotes only one side, or attributes twice as much or more quotation to one side, the story is considered **OUT OF BALANCE**. Broadcast stories of less than 30 seconds are not evaluated for Issue Debate Balance.





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